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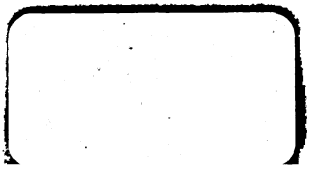

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THE

WORKS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

VOLUME VI.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM DUANE.

1809.

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THE

WORKS

OF

DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

IN

PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS, AND MORALS:

CONTAINING HIS

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE,

AS MINISTER OF THE UNITED STATES,

AT THE COURT OF VERSAILLES;

HIS

PRIVATE EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE,

MISCELLANEOUS, LITERARY, AND PHILOSOPHICAL SUBJECTS,

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1753 AND 1790,

DEVELOPING

THE SECRET HISTORY

OF HIS POLITICAL TRANSACTIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS.

PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINALS, BY HIS GRANDSON,

WM. TEMPLE FRANKLIN.

VOL. VI.

PHILADELPHIA: PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM DUANE.

1817.

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May 1913

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BY THE PUBLISHER IN PHILADELPHIA.

THE Works of Dr. Franklin were put to press in London contemporaneously with the printing of the present volume. Many original letters however were in the hands of the Philadelphia publisher, and in the hands of other private individuals and literary societies in the United States, some of which, not possessed by Mr. W. T. Franklin, are inserted in the present volume; but so many others have been brought to light, both in the United States and in Europe, as to afford materials equally interesting for another volume. No arrangements however are at present made for their publication, though there probably will be very soon, of which notice will be given.

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MEMOIRS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

MISCELLANEOUS.

PART II.[a]

To Mrs. Abiah Franklin.

Philadelphia, April.
(Date uncertain.)

HONOURED MOTHER,

WE received your kind letter of the 2d instant, by which we are glad to hear you still enjoy such a measure of health, notwithstanding your great age. We read your writing very easily. I never met with a word in your letter but what I could easily understand, for though the hand is not always the best, the sense makes every thing plain. My leg, which you inquire after, is now quite well. I shall keep these servants: but the man not in my own house. I have hired him out to the man that takes care of my Dutch printing-office, who agrees to keep him in victuals and clothes, and to pay me a dollar a week for his work. The wife, since that affair, behaves exceeding well: but we conclude to sell them both the first good opportunity, for we do not like negro servants. We got again about half what we lost.

[a] Part I. of Miscellaneous Correspondence, and Part I. of Political, are comprehended in vol. V. of this edition.

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As to your grandchildren, Will is now 19 years of age, a tall proper youth, and much of a beau. He acquired a habit of idleness on the expedition, but begins of late to apply himself to business, and I hope will become an industrious man. He imagined his father had got enough for him, but I have assured him that I intend to spend what little I have myself, if it please God that I live long enough, and as he by no means wants acuteness, he can see by my going on, that I mean to be as good as my word.

Sally grows a fine girl, and is extremely industrious with her needle, and delights in her work. She is of a most affectionate temper, and perfectly dutiful and obliging to her parents, and to all. Perhaps I flatter myself too much, but I have hopes that she will prove an ingenious, sensible, notable, and worthy woman, like her aunt Jenny—she goes now to the dancing school.

For my own part, at present, I pass my time agreeably enough; I enjoy (through mercy) a tolerable share of health. I read a great deal, ride a little, do a little business for myself, (now and then for others) retire when I can, and go into company when I please, so the years roll round, and the last will come, when I would rather have it said, *he lived usefully*, than *he died rich*.

Cousins Josiah and Sally are well, and I believe will do well, for they are an industrious loving young couple; but they want a little more stock to go on smoothly with their business.

My love to brother and sister Mecom and their children, and to all my relations in general.

I am, your dutiful son,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Miss Jane Franklin.[b]

Philadelphia, January 6, 1726-7.

DEAR SISTER,

I AM highly pleased with the account captain Freeman gives me of you. I always judged by your behaviour when a child that you would make a good, agreeable woman, and you know you were ever my peculiar favourite. I have been thinking what would be a suitable present for me to make, and for you to receive, as I hear you are grown a celebrated beauty. I had almost determined on a tea table, but when I considered that the character of a good housewife was far preferable to that of being only a pretty gentlewoman, I concluded to send you a *spinning wheel*, which I hope you will accept as a small token of my sincere love and affection.

Sister, farewell, and remember that modesty, as it makes the most homely virgin amiable and charming, so the want of it infallibly renders the most perfect beauty disagreeable and odious. But when that brightest of female virtues shines among other perfections of body and mind in the same person, it makes the woman more lovely than an angel. Excuse this freedom, and use the same with me. I am, dear Jenny, your loving brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

Philadelphia, June 19, 1730.

DEAR SISTER,

YOURS of May 26, I received with the melancholy news of the death of sister Deavenport, a loss, without doubt, regretted by all that knew her, for she was a good woman. Her friends ought, however, to be comforted that they have enjoyed her so long and that she has passed through the world

---

[b] This sister of Dr. Franklin's was married to Mr. Edward Mecom, July 27, 1727.

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happily, having never had any extraordinary misfortune or notable affliction, and that she is now secure in rest, in the place provided for the virtuous. I had before heard of the death of your first child, and am pleased that the loss is in some measure made up to you by the birth of a second.

We have had the small pox here lately, which raged violently while it lasted; there have been about fifty persons innoculated, who all recovered, except a child of the doctor's, upon whom the small pox appeared within a day or two after the operation, and who is therefore thought to have been certainly infected before. In one family in my neighbourhood there appeared a great mortality, Mr. George Claypole, (a descendant of Oliver Cromwell) has, by industry, acquired a great estate, and being in excellent business, (a merchant) would probably have doubled it, had he lived according to the common course of years.

He died first, suddenly; within a short time died his best negro; then one of his children; then a negro woman; then two children more, buried at the same time; then two more: so that I saw two double buryings come out of the house in one week. None were left in the family, but the mother and one child, and both their lives till lately despaired of; so that all the father's wealth, which every body thought, a little while ago, had heirs enough, and no one would have given six pence for the reversion, was in a few weeks brought to the greatest probability of being divided among strangers: so uncertain are all human affairs: the dissolution of this family is generally ascribed to an imprudent use of quick silver in the cure of the itch; Mr. Claypole applying it as he thought proper, without consulting a physician for fear of charges, and the small pox coming upon them at the same time made their case desperate. But what gives me the greatest concern, is the account you give me of my sister Homes's, misfortune: I know a cancer in the breast is often thought incurable: yet we have here in town a kind of shell made of some wood, cut at a proper time, by some man of great skill (as they say,) which has done wonders in that dis-

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ease among us, being worn for some time on the breast. I am not apt to be superstitiously fond of believing such things, but the instances are so well attested as sufficiently to convince the most incredulous.

This if I have interest enough to procure, as I think I have, I will borrow for a time and send it to you, and hope the doctors you have will at least allow the experiment to be tried, and shall rejoice to hear it has the accustomed effect.

You have mentioned nothing in your letter of our dear parents, but I conclude they are well because you say nothing to the contrary. I want to hear from sister Douse, and to know of her welfare, as also of my sister Lydia, who I hear is lately married. I intended to have visited you this summer, but printing the paper money here has hindered me near two months, and our assembly will sit the 2d of August next, at which time I must not be absent, but I hope to see you this Fall.

I am,

Your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

Philadelphia, July 28, 1743.

DEAREST SISTER JENNY,

I TOOK your admonition very kindly, and was far from being offended at you for it. If I say any thing about it to you, 'tis only to rectify some wrong opinions you seem to have entertained of me; and this I do only because they give you some uneasiness, which I am unwilling to be the occasion of. You express yourself as if you thought I was against worshipping of God, and doubt that good works would merit heaven; which are both fancies of your own, I think, without foundation. I am so far from thinking that God is not to be worshipped, that I have composed and wrote a whole book of devotions for my own use, and I imagine there are few if

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any in the world so weak as to imagine, that the little good we can do here can merit so vast a reward hereafter.

There are some things in your New England doctrine and worship, which I do not agree with: but I do not therefore condemn them, or desire to shake your belief or practice of them. We may dislike things that are nevertheless right in themselves: I would only have you make me the same allowance, and have a better opinion both of morality and your brother. Read the pages of Mr. Edwards's late book, entitled, "Some Thoughts concerning the present Revival of Religion in New England," from 367 to 375, and when you judge of others, if you can perceive the fruit to be good, don't terrify yourself that the tree may be evil; but be assured it is not so, for you know who has said "Men do not gather grapes off thorns, and figs off thistles." I have not time to add, but that I shall always be, your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. It was not kind in you, when your sister commended good works, to suppose she intended it a reproach to you. 'Twas very far from her thoughts.

To Mr. Josias and Mrs. Abiah Franklin.

Philadelphia, September 6, 1744.

HONOURED FATHER AND MOTHER,

I APPREHEND I am too busy in prescribing and meddling in the doctor's sphere, when any of you complain of ails in your letters. But as I always employ a physician myself, when any disorder arises in my family, and submit implicitly to his orders in every thing, so I hope you consider my advice when I give any, only as a mark of my good will, and put no more of it in practice than happens to agree with what your doctor directs. Your notion of the use of strong lye I suppose may have a good deal in it. The salt of tartar, or salt of wormwood, frequently prescribed for cutting, opening and cleansing, is nothing more than the salt

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of lye procured by evaporation. Mrs. Steevens's medicine for the stone and gravel, the secret of which was lately purchased at a great price by the parliament, has for its principal ingredient salt, which Boerhaave calls the most universal remedy. The same salt intimately mixed with oil of turpentine, which you also mentioned, make the *sapor philosophorum* wonderfully extolled by some chymists for like purposes. It is highly probable (as your doctor says) that medicines are much altered in passing between the stomach and bladder; but such salts seem well fitted in their nature to pass with the least alteration of almost any thing we know; and if they will not dissolve gravel and stone, yet I am half persuaded that a moderate use of them may go a great way towards preventing these disorders, as they assist a weaker digestion in the stomach and powerfully dissolve crudities such as those which I have frequently experienced. As to honey and molasses, I did not maintain them merely as openers and looseners but also from conjecture, that as they are heavier in themselves than our common drink, they might when dissolved in our bodies increase the gravity of our fluids, the urine in particular, and by that means keep separate and suspended therein, those particles which, when unused form gravel, &c. I will enquire after the herb you mention; we have a botanist here, an intimate friend of mine, who knows all the plants in the country: He would be glad of the correspondence of some gentlemen of the same taste with you, and has twice, through my hands, sent specimens of the famous Chinese *Ginseng*, found here, to persons who desired it in Boston, neither of whom, have had the civility to write him a word in answer, or even to acknowledge the receipt of it, of which, please to give a hint to brother John.

We have had a very healthy summer and a fine harvest, the country is filled with bread; but as trade declines, since the war began, I know not what our farmers will do for a market. I am,

Your affectionate and dutiful son,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Mrs. Abiah Franklin.

Philadelphia, October 16, 1747.

HONOURED MOTHER,

THIS has been a busy day with your daughter and she is gone to bed much fatigued and cannot write.

I send you inclosed, one of our new almanacks; we print them early, because we send them to many places far distant. I send you also, a moidore inclosed, which please to accept towards chaise hire, that you may ride warm to meetings this winter. Pray tell us, what kind of a sickness you have had in Boston this summer: besides the measles and flux, which have carried off many children, we have lost some grown persons, by what we call the *Yellow Fever;* though that is almost if not quite over, thanks to God, who has preserved all our family, in perfect health. Here are cousins Coleman, and two Folgers, all well. Your grandaughter, is the greatest lover of her book and school, of any child I ever knew, and is very dutiful to her mistress as well as to us. I doubt not but brother Mecom will send the collar as soon as he can conveniently. My love to him, sister, and all the children.

I am,

Your dutiful son,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. D. Franklin.

Guadenhathen, January 25, 1756.

MY DEAR CHILD,

THIS day week we arrived here, I wrote to you the same day, and once since. We all continue well, thanks be to God. We have been hindered with bad weather, yet our fort is in a good defensible condition, and we have every day, more convenient living. Two more are to be built, one on each side of this, at about fifteen miles distance. I hope both will be done

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in a week or ten days, and then I purpose to bend my course homewards.

We have enjoyed your roast beef, and this day began on the roast veal; all agree that they are both the best that ever were of the kind. Your citizens, that have their dinners hot and hot, know nothing of good eating; we find it in much greater perfection when the kitchen is four score miles from the dining room.

The apples are extremely welcome, and do bravely to eat after our salt pork; the minced pies are not yet come to hand, but suppose we shall find them among the things expected up from Bethlehem, on Tuesday; the capillaire is excellent, but none of us having taken cold as yet, we have only tasted it.

As to our lodging, 'tis on deal feather beds, in warm blankets, and much more comfortable than when we lodged at our inn, the first night after we left home, for the woman being about to put very damp sheets on the bed we desired her to air them first; half an hour afterwards, she told us the bed was ready, and the sheets *well aired*. I got into bed, but jumped out immediately, finding them as cold as death, and partly frozen. She had *aired* them indeed, but it was out upon the *hedge*. I was forced to wrap myself up in my great coat and woollen trowsers, every thing else about the bed was shockingly dirty.

As I hope in a little time to be with you and my family, and chat things over, I now only add, that I am,

Dear Debby,

Your affectionate husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the same.

Fort Allen, at Gnadenheutten, Jan. 30, 1756.

MY DEAR CHILD,

EVERY other day, since we have been here, it has rained more or less, to our no small hindrance. It rained yesterday, and now again to day, which prevented our marching: so I will sit down half an hour to confer a little with you.

All the things you sent me, from time to time, are safely come to hand, and our living grows every day more comfortable: yet there are many things we still want, but do not send for them, as we hope our stay here will not be long.

I thought to have wrote you a long letter, but here comes in a number of people, from different parts, that have business with me, and interrupt me; we have but one room, and that quite public: so can only add, that I have just received yours, Sally's, and Grace's letters, of the 25th, with one from Mr. Hughes, and one from Mr. Thomson: present my respects to those gentlemen, (and excuse my not writing, as I have nothing material, and much hurried,) and love to all our friends and neighbors. Billy presents his duty to you, and love to his sister: all the gentlemen their compliments, they drink your health at every meal, having always something on the table to put them in mind of you. I found among the newspapers, Mr. Shoen's bills of exchange, which should not have been sent up here; I suppose it was by mistake, and mention it, that you need not be troubled to look more for them.

I am, dear girl,

Your loving husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the same.

Fort Allen, Jan. 31, 1756.

MY DEAR,

I WROTE a line to you yesterday, and having this opportunity, write another, just to let you know that we all continue well, and much the better from the refreshments you have sent us: in short we do very well, for though there are a great number of things, besides what we have, that used to seem necessary to comfortable living, yet we have learnt to do without them.

Mr. Beaty is a very useful man here, and the doctor another; besides their services to the public, they are very agreeable companions to me; they, with captain Clapham, Mr. Edmond, and the rest of our company, present their hearty respects to you for the goodies. Billy presents his duty to you and his grandmother, and love to his sister. Distribute my compliments among our acquaintance, and hearty love to all friends. The bearer waits, that I cannot write to my dear Sally.

I am,

Dear girl,

Your loving husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

Mrs. Jane Mecom, Boston.

New York, June 28, 1756.

DEAR SISTER,

I RECEIVED here your letter of extravagant thanks, which put me in mind of the story of the member of parliament, who began one of his speeches with saying, he thanked God, he was born and bred a presbyterian; on which another took leave to observe, that the gentleman must needs be of a most grateful disposition, since he was thankful for such very small matters.

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You desire me to tell you what I know about Benny's removal, and the reasons of it. Sometime last year, when I returned from a long journey, I found a letter from him, which had been sometime unanswered, and it was some considerable time afterwards, before I knew of an opportunity to send an answer. I should first have told you, that when I set him up at Antigua, he was to have the use of the printing house on the same terms with his predecessor, Mr. Smith: that is, allowing me one-third part of the profits. After this, finding him diligent and careful, for his encouragement, I relinquished that agreement, and let him know, that as you were removed into a dearer house, if he paid you yearly a certain sum, I forgot what it was, towards discharging your rent, and another small sum to me, in sugar and rum, for my family use, he need keep no farther accounts of the profits, but should enjoy all the rest to himself; I cannot remember what the whole of both payments amounted to, but I think they did not exceed 20*l.* a-year. The truth is, I intended, from the first, to give him that printing house: but as he was young and inexperienced in the world, I thought it best not to do it immediately, but to keep him a little dependent for a time, to check the flighty unsteadiness of temper, which on several occasions, he had discovered; and what I received from him, I concluded to lay out in new letters (or types), that when I give it him entirely, it might be worth his acceptance; and if I should die first, I put it in my will, that the letters should be all new cast for him. This proposal of paying you and me a certain annual sum, did not please him, and he wrote to desire I would explicitly tell him how long that annual payment was to continue? whether, on payment of that, all prior demands, I had against him, for the arrears of our first agreement, were likewise cancelled, and finally insisted that I would name a certain sum, that I would take for the printing house, and allow him to pay it off in parts, as he could, and then the yearly payments to cease; for though he had a high esteem for me, yet he loved freedom, and his spirit could not bear dependence on any man, though he were

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the best man living. This was the letter which occasionally remained, as I said, so long unanswered: at which, he took farther offence, and before I could answer it, I received another from him, acquainting me that he had come to a resolution to move from this island; that his resolution was fixed, and nothing that could be said to him should move or shake it, and proposed another person to me, to carry on the business in his room. This was immediately followed by another and a third letter, to the same purpose all declaring the inflexibility of his determination to leave the island, but without saying where he proposed to go, or what were his motives. So I wrote him that I would not attempt to change his resolutions; that I made no objections to his quitting, but wished he had let me know where he was going. That, as to the person he recommended to succeed, I had kept the office there after Mr. Smith's decease, in hopes it might be of use to him (Benny). I did not incline to be concerned with any other there. However if the person would buy it, I named the price; if not, I directed it to be packed up and sent home; all I desired of him, was to discharge what he owed to Mr. Strahan, bookseller in London, one of my friends, who had credited him, on my recommendation.

By this post I received the inclosed letter, and understand the things are all arrived. I shall be very glad to hear he does better in another place, but I fear he will not for some years be cured of his fickleness and get fixed to any purpose; however, we must hope for the best, as with this fault he has many good qualities and virtues.

My love to brother and children and to all that love you.

I am, dear sister,

Your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Mrs. D. Franklin.

Easton, Saturday Morning, Nov. 13, 1756.

My Dear Child,

I WROTE to you a few days since, by a special messenger, and inclosed letters, for all our wives and sweethearts; expecting to hear from you by his return, and to have the northern newspapers and English letters, per the packet; but he is just now returned without a scrap for poor us. So I had a good mind not to write to you by this opportunity; but I never can be ill-natured enough, even when there is the most occasion. The messenger, says he left the letters at your house, and saw you afterwards at Mr. Dentie's and told you when he would go, and that he lodged at Honey's, next door to you, and yet you did not write; so let Goody Smith, give one more just judgment, and say what should be done to you; I think I wont tell you that we are well, nor that we expect to return about the middle of the week, nor will I send you a word of news; that's poz. My duty to mother, love to the children, and to Miss Betsey and Gracey, &c. &c.

I am,

Your *loving* husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. I have *scratched out the loving words*, being writ in haste by mistake, when I *forgot I was angry.*

To Mrs. Jane Mecom, Boston.

New York, April 19, 1757.

DEAR SISTER,

I WROTE a few lines to you yesterday, but omitted to answer yours, relating to sister Dowse. *As having their own way*, is one of the greatest comforts of life, to old people, I think their friends should endeavor to accommodate them in that as well as in any thing else. When they have long lived

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in a house, it becomes natural to them; they are almost as closely connected with it, as the tortoise with his shell; they die, if you tear them out of it; old folks and old trees, if you remove them, 'tis ten to one that you kill them, so let our good old sister, be no more importuned on that head: we are growing old fast ourselves, and shall expect the same kind of indulgencies; if we give them, we shall have a right to receive them in our turn.

And as to her few fine things, I think she is in the right not to sell them, and for the reason she gives, that they will fetch but little, when that little is spent, they would be of no farther use to her; but perhaps the expectation of possessing them at her death, may make that person tender and careful of her, and helpful to her to the amount of ten times their value. If so they are put to the best use they possibly can be.

I hope you visit sister as often as your affairs will permit, and afford her what assistance and comfort you can in her present situation. *Old age*, *infirmities*, and *poverty*, joined, are afflictions enough. The *neglect* and *slights* of friends and near relations should never be added—people in her circumstances are apt to suspect this sometimes without cause; *appearances* should therefore be attended to in our conduct towards them as well as *relatives*. I write by this post to cousin William, to continue his care, which I doubt not he will do.

We expect to sail in about a week, so that I can hardly hear from you again on this side the water; but let me have a line from you now and then, while I am in London—I expect to stay there at least a twelvemonth. Direct your letters to be left for me at the Pennsylvania Coffee-house, in Birchin lane, London.

My love to all—from, dear sister,

Your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

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PS. April 25.—We are still here, and perhaps may be here a week longer. Once more adieu, my dear sister.

To the same.

Woodbridge, East New Jersey, May 21, 1757.

DEAR SISTER,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 9th instant, in which you acquainted me with some of your late troubles. Those are troublesome times to us all; but perhaps you have heard more than you should. I am glad to hear that Peter is at a place where he has full employ. A trade is a valuable thing; but unless a habit of industry be acquired with it, it turns out of little use: if he gets THAT in his new place, it will be a happy exchange, and the occasion not an unfortunate one.

It is very agreeable to me to hear so good an account of your other children—in such a number to have no bad ones is a great happiness.

The horse sold very low indeed: if I wanted one to-morrow, knowing his goodness, old as he is, I should freely give more than twice the money for him; but you did the best you could, and I will take of Benny no more than he produced.

I don't doubt but Benny will do very well when he gets to work; but I fear his things from England may be so long a-coming as to occasion the loss of the rent. Would it not be better for you to move into the house? Perhaps not, if he is near being married. I know nothing of that affair but what you write me, except that I think Miss Betsey a very agreeable sweet-tempered good girl, who has had a housewifely education, and will make, to a good husband, a very good wife. Your sister and I have a great esteem for her, and if she will be kind enough to accept of our nephew, we think it will be his own fault if he is not as happy as the married state can make him; the family is a respectable one,

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but whether there be any fortune I know not, and as you do not inquire about this particular, I suppose you think with me, that where every thing else desirable is to be met with, that is not very material. If she does not bring a fortune she will have to make one. Industry, frugality, and prudent economy, in a wife, are to a tradesman, in their effects, a fortune; and a fortune sufficient for Benjamin, if his expectations are reasonable. We can only add, that if the young lady and her friends are willing, we give our consent heartily, and our blessing. My love to brother, and the children concludes with me.

Your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Jane Mecom, Boston.

New York, May 26, 1757.

DEAR AND HONOURED AUNT,

TO find ourselves affectionately remembered by those for whom we have the highest esteem, is of all things most agreeable: this pleasure was afforded me in the greatest degree, when I received your favour of the 9th instant. The many kind wishes it contains for my welfare, lays me under the greatest obligations. I hope my conduct will ever be such as to merit a continuance of your regard.

Being just on the point of embarkation, prevents my adding more than my best respects to Mr. Mecom, cousin Benny, &c. and to desire you will believe me to be,

Your affectionate

And dutiful nephew,

Wm. FRANKLIN.[c]

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[c] The late governor Franklin.

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To the same.

New York, May 30, 1757.

DEAR SISTER,

I HAVE before me yours of the 9th and 16th instant: I am glad you have resolved to visit sister Dowse oftener; it will be a great comfort to her, to find she is not neglected by you, and your example may, perhaps, be followed by some other of her relations.

As Neddy is yet a young man, I hope he may get over the disorder he complains of, and in time wear it out. My love to him and his wife and the rest of your children. It gives me pleasure to hear that Eben is likely to get into business at his trade. If he will be industrious and frugal, 'tis ten to one but he gets rich, for he seems to have spirit and activity.

I am glad that Peter is acquainted with the crown soap business, so as to make what is good of the kind. I hope he will always take care to make it faithfully, never slight manufacture, or attempt to deceive by appearances. Then he may boldly put his name and mark, and in a little time it will acquire as good a character as that made by his late uncle, or any other person whatever. I believe his aunt at Philadelphia, can help him to sell a good deal of it; and I doubt not of her doing every thing in her power to promote his interest in that way. Let a box be sent to her (but not unless it be right good) and she will immediately return the ready money for it. It was beginning once to be in vogue in Philadelphia, but brother John sent me one box, an ordinary sort, which checked its progress. I would not have him put the Franklin arms on it; but the soapboilers arms he has a right to use, if he thinks fit. The other would look too much like an attempt to counterfeit. In his advertisements, he may value himself on serving his time with the original maker, but put his own mark or device on the papers, or any thing he may be advised to as proper; only on the soap, as it is called by the name of crown soap, it seems necessary to use a stamp of that sort, and perhaps

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no soapboiler in the king's dominions has a better right to the crown than himself.

Nobody has wrote a syllable to me concerning his making use of the hammer, or made the least complaint of him or you. I am sorry however that he took it without leave. It was irregular, and if you had not approved of his doing it, I should have thought it indiscreet. *Leave* they say is *light*, and it seems to me a piece of respect that was due to his aunt to ask it, and I can scarce think she would have refused him the favour.

I am glad to hear Jamey is so good and diligent a workman; if he ever sets up at the goldsmith's business, he must remember that there is one accomplishment without which he cannot possibly thrive in that trade, (i. e. *to be perfectly honest*). It is a business that though ever so uprightly managed, is always liable to suspicion; and if a man is once detected in the smallest fraud it soon becomes public, and every one is put upon their guard against him; no one will venture to try his hands, or trust him to make up their plate; so at once he is ruined. I hope my nephew will therefore establish a character as an *honest* and faithful, as well as *skilful* workman, and then he need not fear employment.

And now as to what you propose for Benny I believe he may be, as you say, well enough qualified for it, and when he appears to be settled, if a vacancy should happen, it is very probable he may be thought of to supply it; but it is a rule with me, not to remove any officer that behaves well, keeps regular accounts, and pays duly; and I think the rule is founded on reason and justice. I have not shown any backwardness to assist Benny, where it could be done without injuring another. But if my friends require of me to gratify not only their inclinations, but their resentments, they expect too much of me. Above all things I dislike family quarrels, andwhen they happen among my relations, nothing gives me more pain. If I were to set myself up as a judge of those subsisting between you and brother's widow and children, how unqualified must I be, at this distance, to determine rightly, especially

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having heard but one side. They always treated me with friendly and affectionate regard, you have done the same. What can I say between you, but that I wish you were reconciled, and that I will love that side best that is most ready to forgive and oblige the other. You will be angry with me here, for putting you and them too much upon a footing, but I shall nevertheless be,

Dear sister, your truly
Affectionate brother,
B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. D. Franklin.

London, Nov. 22, 1757.

My Dear Child,

DURING my illness, which continued near eight weeks, I wrote you several little letters, as I was able; the last was by the packet which sailed from Falmouth above a week since: in that I informed you that my intermitting fever which had continued to harrass me, by frequent relapses, was gone off, and I have ever since been gathering strength and flesh. My doctor, Fothergill, who had forbid me the use of pen and ink, now permits me to write as much as I can without over fatiguing myself, and therefore I sit down to write more fully than I have hitherto been able to do.

The 2d of September I wrote to you that I had had a violent cold and something of a fever, but that it was almost gone. However, it was not long before I had another severe cold, which continued longer than the first, attended by great pain in my head, the top of which was very hot, and when the pain went off, very sore and tender. These fits of pain continued sometimes longer than at others; seldom less than 12 hours, and once 36 hours. I was now and then a little delirious: they cupped me on the back of the head which seemed to ease me for the present; I took a great deal of bark, both in substance and infusion, and too soon thinking myself well, I ventured out twice, to do a little business and forward the

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service I am engaged in, and both times got fresh cold and fell down again; my good doctor grew very angry with me, for acting contrary to his cautions and directions, and obliged me to promise more observance for the future. He attended me very carefully and affectionately; and the good lady of the house nursed me kindly; Billy was also of great service to me, in going from place to place, where I could not go myself, and Peter was very diligent and attentive. I took so much bark in various ways that I began to abhor it; I durst not take a vomit, for fear of my head; but at last I was seized one morning with a vomiting and purging, the latter of which continued the greater part of the day, and I believe was a kind of crisis to the distemper, carrying it clear off; for ever since I feel quite lightsome, and am every day gathering strength; so I hope my seasoning is over, and that I shall enjoy better health during the rest of my stay in England.

I have now before me, your letters of July 17, July 31, August 11, August 21, September 4, September 19, October 1, and October 9. I thank you for writing to me so frequently and *fully*; I believe I have missed none of your letters yet, but those by Lyon, who was taken.

You mention Mr. Scott's being robbed, but do not say to what value; was it considerable? I have seen Mr. Ralph, and delivered him Mrs. Garrigues's letter. He is removed from Turnham Green; when I return I 'll tell you every thing relating to him, in the mean time I must advise Mrs. Garrigues not to write to him again, till I send her word how to direct her letters, he being unwilling, for some good reasons, that his present wife should know any thing of his having any connections in America. He expresses great affection for his daughter and grand children. He has but one child here.

I have found David Edwards, and send you some of his letters, with one for his father. I am glad to hear that our friends at Newark got well through the small pox.

The above particulars are in answer to things mentioned in your letters, and so are what follow.

Governor Shirley's affairs are still in an uncertain state; he

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is endeavouring to obtain an enquiry into his conduct, but the confusion of public affairs occasions it to be postponed. He and I visit frequently.

I make no doubt but reports will be spread by my enemies to my disadvantage, but let none of them trouble you. If I find I can do my country no good, I will take care at least not to do it any harm; I will neither seek nor expect any thing for myself; and though I may perhaps not be able to obtain for the people what they wish and expect, no interest shall induce me to betray the trust they have reposed in me; so make yourself quite easy with regard to such reports.

Mr. Hunter is better than he has been for a long time, he and his sister desire to be remembered to you.

I believe I left the seal with Mr. Parker.

I am glad to hear that Mr. Boudinot has so seasonable a supply; and hope he will not go to mining again.

I am obliged to all my friends that visit you in my absence. My love to them.

Mr. Ralph delivered me your letters very obligingly; he is well respected by people of value here.

I thank you for sending me brother Johnny's journal; I hope he is well, and sister Read and the children.

I am sorry to hear of Mr. Burt's death. He came to me at New York, with a proposal that I did not approve of, but it showed his good will and respect for me; when I return I 'll tell you what it was.

I shall entertain Mr. Collinson and Dr. Fothergill with your account of Tidyuskin's visit.

I should have read Sally's French letter with more pleasure, but that I thought the French rather too good to be all her own composing; I suppose her master must have corrected it. But I am glad she is improving in that and her music; I send her a French Pamela.

You were very lucky in not insuring the rum. We are obliged to Mr. Booth for his care in that remittance. I suppose you have wrote to acknowledge the receipt of it. I have not yet seen Mr. Burkett.

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I am not much surprised at Green's behaviour; he has not an honest principle I fear. I have not yet seen Mr. Wolsteinholme, but he is arrived.

I am glad you sent to Elizabeth-town, and that Ben has got that good girl. I hope they will do well, when you write remember my love to her.

December 3. I write by little and little as I can find time; I have now gone through all your agreeable letters, which give me fresh pleasure every time I read them. Last night I received another, dated October 16, which brings me the good news that you and Sally were got safe home; your last of the 9th, being from Elizabeth town. Budden's ship is not yet come up to London, but is daily expected, having been some time at Cowes. Mr. Hall has sent me a bill, as you mention. Mr. Walsteinholme is come to town and I expect to see him to day. When I have enquired how things are with Green, I shall write some directions to you what to do in the affair.

I am glad to hear that Miss Ray is well, and that you correspond. It is not convenient to be forward in giving advice in such cases. She has prudence enough to judge for herself, and I hope she will judge and act for the best.

I hear there is a miniature painter gone over to Philadelphia, a relation to John Reynolds. If Sally's picture is not done to your mind, by the young man, and the other gentleman is a good hand and follows the business, suppose you get Sally's done by him, and send it me with your small picture, that I may here get all our little family drawn in one conversation piece.

I am sorry to hear of the general sickness; I hope it is over before this time, and that little Franky is recovered.

I was as much disappointed in my intention of writing by that packet as you were in not receiving letters by her, and it has since given me a great deal of vexation. I wrote to you by way of New York, the day after my arrival in London, which I do not find you have received.

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I do not use to be a backward correspondent though my sickness has brought me behind hand with my friends in that respect.

Had I been well, I intended to have gone round among the shops and bought some pretty things for you and my dear good Sally, (whose little hands you say eased your headache) to send by this ship, but I must now defer it to the next, having only got a crimson satin cloak for you, the newest fashion, and the blacksilk for Sally; but Billy sends her a scarlet feather, muff, and tippet, and a box of fashionable linen for her dress; in the box is a thermometer for Mr. Taylor and one for Mr. Schlatter, which you will carefully deliver; as also, a watch for Mr. Schlatter. I shall write to them; the black silk was sent to Mr. Neates, who undertook to forward it in some package of his.

It is now twelve days since I began to write this letter, and I still continue well, but have not yet quite recovered my strength, flesh, or spirits. I every day drink a glass of infusion of bark in wine, by way of prevention, and hope my fever will no more return; on fair days, which are but few, I venture out about noon.

The agreeable conversation I meet with among men of learning, and the notice taken of me by persons of distinction, are the principal things that soothe me for the present, under this painful absence from my family and friends. Yet those would not keep me here another week, if I had not other inducements; duty to my country, and hopes of being able to do it service.

Pray remember me kindly to all that love us, and to all that we love. 'Tis endless to name names.

I am, my dear child,

Your loving husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the same.

London, December 13, 1757.

DEAR MADAM,

I WILL not write to you, for the future, as a stranger whom I never had the happiness of seeing, but as to one with whom I have been for some time acquainted, for having had the pleasure for several months past, to be personally known to what you will readily allow, to be your better half, you 'll permit me to fancy, I am by no means ignorant of the essential qualities of the other.

I had for many years, conceived a very high, and now find, a very just opinion of Mr. Franklin; this I was naturally led to by the concurring testimony of every body, who knew him, (for the voice of his enemies, if he had any, never reached me) and by the opportunities I have had of judging for myself, during my correspondence with him for a dozen years. But though the notion I had formed of him, in my own mind, before I had the pleasure of seeing him, was really as far as it went, just enough; I must confess it was very unequal to what I now know his singular merit deserves.

I own it is somewhat odd, to entertain a lady with the character of her husband, who must herself, of all others, be the least ignorant in that particular. But as all who know me, know that I cannot help speaking my sentiments freely, on any subject that strikes me in a great degree, so I choose to write my mind in regard to Mr. Franklin, before all others to you, because you are the most unexceptionable judge of the truth and propriety of what I say, and because I am persuaded you will listen to me, not only with patience but with pleasure; and indeed, whatever your own personal qualities may be, however amiable and engaging in my mind, your being the choice of such a man, must add greatly to your honour, to be the wife of one who has so much ability, inclination, and success, if you view him in a public capacity, in being eminently useful to his country, must necessarily confer

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on you great reputation, and to be the bosom friend of one who is equally fitted to promote any kind of domestic happiness, must as necessarily be the constant spring of the most substantial comfort to you.

For my own part, I never saw a man who was, in every respect, so perfectly agreeable to me. Some are amiable in one view, some in another, he in all. Now madam as I know the ladies here consider him in exactly the same light I do, upon my word I think you should come over, with all convenient speed to look after your interest; not but that I think him as faithful to his Joan, as any man breathing; but who knows what repeated and strong temptation, may in time, and while he is at so great a distance from you, accomplish. Besides, what a delightful expedition would this be to Miss Franklin, and how much must it amuse and improve her, to see and live a while in this great city. I know you will object to the length of the voyage and the danger of the seas, but truly this is more terrible in apprehension than in reality; of all the ways of travelling it is the easiest and most expeditious; and as for the danger, there has not a soul been lost between Philadelphia and this, in my memory; and I believe, not one ship taken by the enemy. Is the trouble and risque then of such a voyage, to be compared in any degree, with the pleasure it will afford you and your best friends. By no means. Instead of being afraid of the sea, we ought to have a particular regard for it, as it is so far from being a bar to the communication and intercourse of different and far distant countries, that it facilitates their correspondence in a very high degree. Nay more, it conveys in the floating castles of your mother country, that protection and assistance which I trust will soon give peace to your borders. I might urge as an additional inducement for you to come over in the spring, that the important business with which Mr. Franklin is charged, in the service of his country, (which I dare say you would wish above all things may be brought to a happy conclusion) may very probably detain him more than one season, which

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will exhaust your patience to such a degree, that you may repent, when too late, you did not listen to my advice.

Your son I really think one of the prettiest young gentlemen I ever knew from America. He seems to me have a solidity of judgment, not very often to be met with in one of his years. This with the daily opportunities he has of improving himself in the company of his father, who is at the same time his friend, his brother, his intimate, and easy companion, affords an agreeable prospect, that your husband's virtues and usefulness to his country, may be prolonged beyond the date of his own life.

Your daughter (I wish I could call her mine), I find by the reports of all who know her, is a very amiable girl in all respects; but of her I shall say nothing, till I have the pleasure of seeing her. Only I must observe to you, that being the mistress of such a family, is a degree of happiness perhaps the greatest that falls to the lot of humanity. I sincerely wish you, very long, the unabated enjoyment of them. I leave it to your friend, to write you every thing from this place, you would desire to know. But I cannot take my leave of you without informing you that Mr. F. has the good fortune to lodge with a very discreet good gentlewoman, who is particularly careful of him, who attended him during a very severe cold he was some time ago seized with, with an assiduity, concern, and tenderness, which perhaps, only yourself could equal: so that I don't think you could have a better substitute till you come over, to take him under your own protection. He is now perfectly recovered.

My own family are, I thank God, just now in perfect health. My wife joins me in kindest compliments to you and dear Miss, not forgetting her honest son David and his fire-side. I wish you a speedy and happy meeting with your friends on this side of the water, which will give great pleasure to,

Dear madam,

Your most affectionate,

Humble servant,

WILLIAM STRAHAN.

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To the same.

London, January 14, 1758.

DEAR DEBBY,

I WROTE a very long letter to you lately, two whole sheets full, containing answers to all yours received during my sickness. I have since received your kind favours of November 13 and November 16th. It has given me great concern that you should be so disappointed in having no letters by captain Luthwycke; you know by this time how it happened; but I wonder you should expect letters from me, by the way of Ireland; it being quite out of my knowledge, when vessels are to sail from thence.

I am thankful to God for sparing my little family in that time of general sickness, and hope to find them all well, at my return. The New York paper you sent me was the latest that came, and of use to our friend, Strahan. He has offered to lay me a considerable wager, that a letter he has wrote to you will bring you immediately over hither; but I tell him I will not pick his pocket; for I am sure there is no inducement strong enough to prevail with you to cross the seas. I would be glad if I could tell you when I expected to be at home, but that is still in the dark; it is possible I may not be able to get away this summer; but I hope, if I stay another winter, it will be more agreeable than the greatest part of the time I have hitherto spent in England. But however I must bring my business to some conclusion.

I received Sally's letter of November 12th, but cannot now write to her. I wrote to my friends generally by last packet, and shall write to them again by a ship of Mr. Ralph's, to sail from here in about a fortnight. I am not yet quite so hearty as before my illness; but I think I am daily stronger and better, so I hope I have had my seasoning; but much writing still disorders me.

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My duty to mother, and love to Sally, Debby, Mr. Dunlap, and all friends that inquire after me.

I am, my dear child,

Your ever loving husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

Billy presents his duty to you and mother, and love to his sister.

To the same.

London, January 21, 1758.

MY DEAR CHILD,

MR. LORIMER, a friend who is going over to General Abercromby, to assist him as a secretary, called on me just now, to acquaint me that he is on the point of setting out. I seize a minute or two just to let you know we are well, that is, I am well, compared to what I have been during a great part of the time since my arrival, and I hope with the spring to recover my full strength. Billy is quite hearty and presents his duty, love, &c.

I have wrote to you by several opportunities, lately, and particularly one long letter of two sheets, which I hope will come to hand, as it contained, a full answer to a number of yours, received during my illness, and I have no copy of it.

I begin to think I shall hardly be able to return before this time twelve months. I am for doing effectually what I came about; and I find it requires both time and patience. You may think perhaps, that I can find many amusements here to pass the time agreeable. 'Tis true, the regard and friendship I meetwith from persons of worth, and the conversation of ingenious men, give me no small pleasure; but at this time of life, domestic comforts afford the most solid satisfaction, and my uneasiness at being absent from my family, and longing desire to be with them, make me often sigh in the midst of cheerful company.

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My love to my dear Sally. I confide in you the care of her and her education; I promise myself the pleasure of finding her much improved at my return.

While I am writing, three letters came in, one from Mr. Hall, one from Rhoads, another from Dr. Bond, but none from you: they are by way of Bristol. I must send this away immediately, lest Mr. Lorimer should be gone. My respects to those gentlemen, to whom I shall write, and to my other friends by Mr. Ralph's vessel, which sails next week.

I am,

Your ever loving husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. When you write to Boston, give my love to sister Jenney—as I have not often time to write to her. If you please you may send her the inclosed little picture.

B. F.

To the same.

Philadelphia, May 1, 1758.

MADAM,

BY favour of Miss D. Williams, I had the pleasure of viewing on Wednesday the effegies in miniature, of your truly worthy spouse; and as the sight of that valuable little piece revived some thoughts of a desire which I have been meditating for some years past, I took the liberty to request Miss Williams to beg in my name, the favour of you madam, not to suffer it to go entirely out of your hands so suddenly as seemed at first to be proposed, that so, I might have an opportunity of explaining what that design was, and of submitting it to your consideration, which I chose to do in writing; as in this way, I can more fully make it known, together with my real motive, which I trust will be understood, as I am myself persuaded that they are with the utmost sincerity of a much nobler kind than more sordid interested expectations.

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Ever since I have been resident in Philadelphia, I have entertained thoughts of performing a piece of mezzotinto, which I have several times practised in Boston, and which, so far as I know, has never yet been done in this city, nor have I ever heard of any person residing here besides myself, that was acquainted with that business. As therefore such an attempt of mine would be the first of the kind in this place. I supposed that that consideration alone would add some value to the performance; and even make amends for any small defects of workmanship (I hoped there would be no very great ones) observable in it; and on that account I was desirous of consecrating it, as an *offering of first fruits*, to the memory of real and eminent worth.

And when I considered which way I should direct my choice for such a subject, my grateful sense of the many instances of Mr. Franklin's goodness to myself, his benevolent endeavours in private life, to promote the interest of any person, though no way connected with his own, and to advance by his candid remarks and wise advice every useful art in America; the great obligations which the whole learned world confess themselves to be under to him for his important philosophical discoveries; his honest steady and undaunted zeal in the cause of Liberty; his knowledge of the true interests, and his wise counsels and unwearied labours for the real service of this province—of America in general—of his nation and his king—manifesting the invaluable friend, the eminent philosopher, the true patriot, the loyal subject, the honest, the truly great and good man—the boast of Boston, his native place—the blessing of Pennsylvania—the admiration of the world! all these considerations bursting upon my mind at once with irresistible conviction, left me no room to hesitate before I fixed my choice; not that I imagine that any poor endeavours of mine can add to or help to perpetuate the fame of my proposed subject; that is already sufficiently extended, and will never be forgotten so long as the lightning's *flash* and thunder's *roar* continue to remind mankind who it was that explained to them the na-

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ture, and taught them how to guard against the effects of that terrifying meteor. My prospect was rather in the first place, to give some other proof than bare words (which how poor so ever in itself should yet be the best in my power) of my gratitude, and the humble respect I bear to such conspicuous merit; and in the next place, I hoped to preserve my own name from oblivion; partly by being the first who should make such an attempt in this place; but chiefly by the judiciousness of my choice, and by fastening my name to one that is already fixed in the annals of fame.

I hope I shall not be suspected, as guilty of the hated sin of fulsome adulation, since the most I can say, can be no more than feint echo of the united voices of men and collective bodies of men, the most respectable for learning in every civilized nation, and whose situations and circumstances in life, compared with Mr. Franklin's, sets them above even the bare possibility of such a suspicion. The truth is, that when I began to write, I intended only a few lines, but being once engaged, the gratitude and veneration that dilates my heart, whenever I think or speak of Mr. Franklin, and the pride also, I will confess, springing from the reflection that I could call such a man my countryman, would force to themselves utterance, almost whether I would or not, and I could not without a great deal of pain have withheld my real sentiments.

I should long since have asked of Mr. Franklin himself his permission, to carry such a design into execution, had it not been for a difficulty which I foresaw would occur, of obtaining a good likeness: for though I profess myself capable of imitating a good draught, ready made to my hands, yet I have no pretensions to drawing after the life; and despairing of having this point settled to my satisfaction, I suffered the thought to sleep; and though I have in that course of time had frequent opportunities of procuring the portraits of other persons who had made themselves remarkable, and perhaps dear enough to a party to answer, all my expectations of gain; yet as I intended that my *first* essay should be

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construed as testifying my sense of the merit of the person represented; I could not think of wronging my consequence by making an offering to idols, and this has been the true and only reason why my design has been so long dormant.

Miss Williams has assured me that you, madam, had the goodness to grant my first request, very readily, which has given me the opportunity of explaining myself thus far, and encouraged me to make the other and principal one, which is no less, than that I may have your permission to attempt Mr. Franklin's portrait in mezzotinto, on a copperplate of the usual size, viz. about fourteen inches long and ten inches broad; and that I may be allowed so much use of the little piece, above mentioned, as may be requisite for my direction in the performance.

If I am so happy as to obtain this suit, no endeavours in my power shall be wanting, to do as much justice as possible to my own gratitude, and to my idea of the superlative merit of the original; that so, if possible, posterity may not be mistaken in the resemblance of a single lineament, in the countenance of a man, for whose memory it will assuredly forever have the highest regard; and after I have done my utmost to this end, I shall cheerfully submit it to the examination and censure, or approbation of yourself madam, and the circle of your friends; and if the performance should be judged as imperfect as that you would not choose to have it made public, I will govern myself entirely by your directions, and either lay aside all farther thoughts of the matter, or else with your permission make another fresh attempt, and even a third rather than fail of success, in an affair which I am so heartily ambitious of accomplishing.

If you please madam to favour me with a few moments attention to this matter, I shall take the liberty after a few days of waiting upon you for your determination, to which shall be paid the greatest regard, by

Madam, your most obedient,

And obliged humble servant,

JAMES TURNER.

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To George Whitefield.[a]

Philadelphia, June 6, 1753.

SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 2d instant, and am glad to hear that you increase in strength; I hope you will continue mending, till you recover your former health and firmness. Let me know whether you still use the cold bath, and what effect it has.

As to the kindness you mention, I wish it could have been of more service to you. But if it had, the only thanks I should desire is, that you would always be equally ready to serve any other person that may need your assistance, and so let good offices go round; for mankind are all of a family.

For my own part, when I am employed in serving others, I do not look upon myself as conferring favours, but as paying debts. In my travels, and since my settlement, I have received much kindness from men, to whom I shall never have any opportunity of making the least direct return; and numberless mercies from God, who is infinitely above being benefited by our services. Those kindnesses from men, I can therefore only return on their fellow men, and I can only show my gratitude for these mercies from God, by a readiness to help his other children, and my brethren. For I do not think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, can discharge our real obligations to each other, and much less those to our Creator. You will see in this my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting to merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree, and eternal in duration: I can do nothing to deserve such rewards. He that for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person, should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands, compared with those who think they deserve heaven

[a] One of the founders of the religious Society of Methodists; born at Glocester, England, 1714, died at Newburyport, Massachusetts, in 1770.

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for the little good they do on earth. Even the mixt imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world, are rather from God's goodness than our merit: how much more such happiness of heaven! For my part I have not the vanity to think I deserve it, the folly to expect it, nor the ambition to desire it; but content myself in submitting to the will and disposal of that God who made me, who has hitherto preserved and blessed me, and in whose fatherly goodness I may well confide, that he will never make me miserable; and that even the afflictions I may at any time suffer shall tend to my benefit.

The faith you mention has certainly its use in the world: I do not desire to see it diminished, nor would I endeavour to lessen it in any man. But I wish it were more productive of good works than I have generally seen it: I mean real good works; works of kindness, charity, mercy, and public spirit; not holiday-keeping, sermon-reading or hearing; performing church ceremonies, or making long prayers, filled with flatteries and compliments, despised even by wise men, and much less capable of pleasing the Deity. The worship of God is a duty; the hearing and reading of sermons may be useful; but if men rest in hearing and praying, as too many do, it is as if a tree should value itself on being watered and putting forth leaves, though it never produced any fruit.

Your great master thought much less of these outward appearances and professions, than many of his modern disciples. He preferred the *doers* of the word, to the mere *hearers;* the son that seemingly refused to obey his father, and yet performed his commands, to him that professed his readiness, but neglected the work; the heretical but charitable Samaritan, to the uncharitable though orthodox priest, and sanctified Levite; and those who gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, raiment to the naked, entertainment to the stranger, and relief to the sick, though they never heard of his name, he declares shall in the last day be accepted; when those who cry Lord! Lord! who value themselves up-

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on their faith, though great enough to perform miracles, but have neglected good works, shall be rejected. He professed that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; which implied his modest opinion, that there were some in his time who thought themselves so good that they need not hear even him for improvement; but now-a-days we have scarce a little parson that does not think it the duty of every man within his reach to sit under his petty ministrations; and that whoever omits them, offends God. I wish to such more humility, and to you health and happiness; being

Your friend and servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Mrs. Franklin.

London, September 6, 1758.

My Dear Child,

IN mine of June 10th, by the Mercury, captain Robinson, I mentioned our having been at Cambridge. We staid there a week, being entertained with great kindness by the principal people, and shown all the curiosities of the place; and, returning by another road to see more of the country, we came again to London. I found the journey advantageous to my health, increasing both my health and spirits, and therefore, as all the great folks were out of town, and public business at a stand, I the more easily prevailed with myself to take another journey and accept of the invitation. We had to be again at Cambridge at the commencement, the beginning of July. We went accordingly, were present at all the ceremonies, dined every day in their halls, and my vanity was not a little gratified by the particular regard shown me by the chancellor and vice chancellor of the university, and the heads of colleges. After the commencement, we went from Cambridge, through Huntingdonshire into Northumberlandshire, and at Wellingborough; on inquiry we found still living Mary Fisher, whose

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maiden name was Franklin, daughter and only child of Thomas Franklin, my father's eldest brother: she is five years older than sister Douse, and remembers her going away with my father and his then wife, and two other children to New England, about the year, 1685. We have had no correspondence with her since my uncle Benjamin's death, now near 30 years. I knew she had lived at Wellingborough, and had married there to one Mr. Richard Fisher, a grazier and tanner, about fifty years ago, but did not expect to see either of them alive, so inquired for their posterity; I was directed to their house and we found them both alive, but weak with age, very glad however to see us; she seems to have been a very smart, sensible woman. They are wealthy, have left off business, and live comfortably. They have had only one child, a daughter, who died, when about thirty years of age, unmarried; she gave me several of my uncle Benjamin's letters to her, and acquainted me where the other remains of the family lived, of which I have, since my return to London, found out a daughter of my father's only sister, very old, and was never married. She is a good clever woman, but poor, though vastly contented with her situation and very cheerful. The others are in different parts of the country: I intend to visit them, but they were too much out of our tour in that journey. From Wellingborough we went to Eaton, about three or four miles, being the village where my father was born, and where his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had lived, and how many of the family before them we know not. We went first to see the old house and grounds; they came to Mr. Fisher with his wife, and after letting them for some years finding his rent something ill paid, he sold them. The land is now added to another farm, and a school kept in the house: it is a decayed old stone building, but still known by the name of Franklin House. Thence we went to visit the rector of the parish, who lives close by the church, a very antient building. He entertained us very kindly, and showed us the old church register, in which were the births, marriages, and burials of our ancestors for 200 years, as early as his book

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began. His wife a goodnatured chatty old lady, (grandaughter of the famous archdeacon Palmer, who formerly had that parish, and lived there,) remembered a great deal about the family; carried us out into the church-yard, and showed us several of their grave stones, which were so covered with moss that we could not read the letters till she ordered a hard brush and basin of water, with which Peter scoured them clean, and then Billy copied them. She entertained and diverted us highly with stories of Thomas Franklin, Mrs. Fisher's father, who was a conveyancer, something of a lawyer, clerk of the county courts, and clerk to the archdeacon, in his visitations; a very leading man in all county affairs, and much employed in public business. He set on foot a subscription for erecting chimes in their steeple, and completed it, and we heard them play. He found out an easy method of saving their village meadows from being drowned, as they used to be sometimes by the river, which method is still in being; but when first proposed, nobody could conceive how it could be; but however they said if Franklin says he knows how to do it, it will be done. His advice and opinion was sought for on all occasions, by all sorts of people, and he was looked upon, she said, by some, as something of a conjurer. He died just four years before I was born, on the same day of the same month.

Since our return to London I have had a kind letter from cousin Fisher, and another from the rector, which I send you.

From Eaton we went to Northampton, where we staid part of the day; then went to Coventry, and from thence to Birmingham—here, upon inquiry, we soon found out yours, and cousin Wilkinson's, and cousin Cash's relations: first we found one of the Cash's, and he went with us to Rebecca Flint's, where we saw her and her husband: she is a turner and he a buttonmaker; they have no children; were very glad to see any person that knew their sister Williamson; told us what letters they had received, and showed us some of them; and even showed us that they had, out of respect, preserved a keg, in which they had received a present of

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some sturgeon. They sent for their brother Joshua North, who came with his wife immediately to see us, he is a turner also, and has six children, a lively active man. Mrs. Flint desired me to tell her sister that they live still in the old house she left them in, which I think she says was their father's. From thence Mr. North went with us to your cousin Benjamin's.

[The leaf of the manuscript book containing the remainder of this letter torn out.]

To Mrs. Jane Mecom, Boston.

London, September 16, 1758.

DEAR SISTER,

I RECEIVED your favour of June 17. I wonder you have had no letter from me since my being in England, I have wrote you at least two, and I think, a third before this, and what was next to waiting on you in person, sent you my picture. In June last I sent Benny a trunk of books, and wrote to him; I hope they are come to hand, and that he meets with encouragement in his business. I congratulate you on the conquest of Cape Breton, and hope as your people took it by praying, the first time, you will now pray that it may never be given up again, which you then forgot. Billy is well, but in the country. I left him at Tunbridge Wells, where we spent a fortnight, and he is now gone with some company to see Portsmouth. We have been together over a great part of England this summer, and among other places, visited the town our father was born in, and found some relations in that part of the country still living.

Our cousin Jane Franklin, daughter of our uncle John, died about a year ago; we saw her husband, Robert Page, who gave us some old letters to his wife, from uncle Benjamin. In one of them, dated Boston, July 4, 1723, he writes

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your uncle Josiah has a daughter Jane, about 12 years old, a good humoured child. So keep up to your character, and don't be angry when you have no letters. In a little book he sent her called "None but Christ," he wrote an acrostick on her name, which for namesakes sake, as well as the good advice it contains, I transcribe and send you, viz.

Illuminated from on high,
And shining brightly in your sphere,
Ne'er feint, but keep a steady eye,
Expecting endless pleasures there.

Flee vice as you 'd a serpent flee:
Raise *faith* and *hope* three stories higher,
And let Christ's endless love to thee
Ne'er cease to make thy love aspire:
Kindness of heart by words express,
Let your obedience be sincere,
In prayer and praise your God address,
Nor cease, till he can cease to hear.

After professing truly that I had a great esteem and veneration for the pious author, permit me a little to play the commentator and critic on these lines. The meaning of *three stories higher*, seems somewhat obscure. You are to understand then that *faith*, *hope*, and *charity* have been called the three steps of Jacob's ladder, reaching from earth to heaven; our author calls them *stories*, likening religion to a building, and these are the three stories of the christian edifice. Thus improvement in religion is called *building up* and *edification*. *Faith* is then the ground floor, *hope* is up one pair of stairs. My dear beloved Jenny, don't delight so much to dwell in those lower rooms, but get as fast as you can into the garret, for in truth the best room in the house is *charity*. For my part, I wish the house was turned upside down; 'tis so difficult (when one is fat) to go up stairs; and not only so, but I imagine *hope* and *faith* may be more firmly built upon *charity*, than *charity* upon *faith* and *hope*. However that may be, I think it the better reading to say—

Raise faith and hope one story higher.

Correct it boldly, and I 'll support the alteration; for when

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you are up two stories already, if you raise your building three stories higher you will make five in all, which is two more than there should be, you expose your upper rooms more to the winds and storms; and, besides, I am afraid the foundation will hardly bear them, unless indeed you build with such light stuff as straw and stubble, and that you know won't stand fire.

Again, where the author says, "Kindness of heart by words express." Strike out *words* and put in *deeds*. The world is too full of compliments already. They are the rank growth of every soil, and choak the good plants of benevolence, and beneficence; nor do I pretend to be the first in this comparison of words and actions to plants; you may remember an antient poet, whose works we have all studied and copied at school long ago.

A man of words and not of deeds
Is like a garden full of weeds.

'Tis pity that good works, among some sorts of people, are so little valued, and good words admired in their stead: I mean seemingly pious discourses, instead of humane benevolent actions. Those they almost put out of countenance, by calling morality *rotten morality*—righteousness *ragged righteousness*, and even filthy rags—and when you mention virtue, pucker up their noses as if they smelt a stink; at the same time that they eagerly snuff up an empty canting harangue, as if it was a posey of the choicest flowers: so they have inverted the good old verse, and say now

A man of deeds and not of words
Is like a garden full of

I have forgot the rhyme, but remember 'tis something the very reverse of perfume. So much by way of commentary. My wife will let you see my letter, containing an account of our travels, which I would have you to read to sister Douse, and give my love to her. I have no thoughts of returning till next year, and then may possibly have the pleasure of seeing you and yours—take Boston in my way home.

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My love to brother and all your children, concludes at this time from,

Dear Jenny,

Your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Lord Kames.[e]

London, January 3, 1760.

MY DEAR LORD,

YOU have been pleased kindly to desire to have all my publications. I had daily expectations of procuring some of them from a friend to whom I formerly sent them, when I was in America, and postponed writing to you, till I should obtain them; but at length he tells me he cannot find them: very mortifying this to an author, that his works should so soon be lost! So I can only send you my *Observations on the Peopling of Countries*, which happens to have been reprinted here; *The Description of the Pennsylvania Fire-place*, a machine of my contriving; and some little sketches that have been printed in the *Grand Magazine*, which I should hardly

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[e] Henry Home, better known by his title of Lord Kames, which he assumed, according to the custom of Scotland, on being appointed in 1752 a judge of the court of Session. He was born in Berwick county in 1696, and was educated to the profession of the law, in which he became distinguished as an advocate and a judge. But his greatest eminence was derived from his literary productions, which were numerous, and some of them very celebrated, particularly his Elements of Criticism, published in 1762; his Sketches of the History of Man, in 1773; a small work published in 1761, entitled An Introduction to the Art of Thinking, which was originally compiled for the use of his own children: it is in two parts, the first a series of moral maxims, the second illustrations by little apologues, invented for the purpose; and anecdotes of different kinds, many of them however are but little adapted to the end. Dr. Franklin, in a visit to Scotland in 1759, with his son William, passed some time with Lord Kames, and a friendship grew out of their intimacy which lasted during their lives. Lord Kames died in 1782.

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own, did I not know that your friendly partiality would make them seem at least tolerable.

How unfortunate I was, that I did not press you and lady Kames more strongly to favour us with your company farther. How much more agreeable would our journey have been, if we could have enjoyed you as far as York—we could have beguiled the way, by discoursing on a thousand things, that now we may never have an opportunity of considering together; for conversation warms the mind, enlivens the imagination, and is continually starting fresh game, that is immediately pursued and taken, and which would never have occurred in the duller intercourse of epistolary correspondence. So that whenever I reflect on the great pleasure and advantage I received from the free communication of sentiment, in the conversation we had at Kames, and in the agreeable little rides to the Tweed side, I shall forever regret our premature parting.

No one can more sincerely rejoice than I do, on the reduction of Canada; and this is not merely as I am a colonist, but as I am a Briton. I have long been of opinion, that the *foundations of the future grandeur and stability of the British empire lie in America;* and though like other foundations, they are low and little now, they are, nevertheless, broad and strong enough to support the greatest political structure, human wisdom ever yet erected. I am therefore by no means for restoring Canada. If we keep it, all the country from Saint Lawrence to Mississippi, will in another century be filled with British people; Britain itself, will become vastly more populous, by the immense increase of its commerce; the Atlantic sea will be covered with your trading ships; and your naval power, thence continually increasing, will extend your influence round the whole globe, and awe the world!—If the French remain in Canada, they will continually harrass our colonies by the Indians, impede, if not prevent their growth; your progress to greatness will at best be slow, and give room for many accidents that may for ever prevent it. But, I refrain, for I see you begin to think my notions extrava-

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gant, and look upon them as the ravings of a mad prophet. Your lordship's kind offer of Penn's picture is extremely obliging. But were it certainly his picture, it would be too valuable a curiosity for me to think of accepting it. I should only desire the favour of leave to take a copy of it. I could wish to know the history of the picture before it came into your hands, and the grounds for supposing it his. I have at present some doubts about it; first, because the primitive quakers declare against pictures as a vain expense; a man's suffering his portrait to be taken was conceived as pride; and I think to this day it is very little practised among them. Then, it is on a board; and I imagine the practice of painting portraits on boards did not come down so low as Penn's time; but of this I am not certain. My other reason is an anecdote I have heard, viz. That when old lord Hobhouse, was adorning his gardens at Stowe, with busts of famous men, he made inquiry of the family, for the picture of William Penn, in order to get a bust formed from it, but could find none: that Sylvanus Bevan, an old quaker apothecary, remarkable for the notice he takes of countenances, and a knack he has of cutting in ivory strong likenesses of persons he has once seen, hearing of lord Hobhouse's desire, set himself to recollect Penn's face, with which he had been well acquainted; and cut a little bust of him in ivory, which he sent to lord Cobham, without any letter or notice that it was Penn's. But my lord, who had personally known Penn, on seeing it, immediately cried out, "Whence comes this? It is William Penn himself!" and from this little bust, they say, the large one in the gardens was formed. I doubt, too, whether the whisker was not quite out of use at the time when Penn must have been of an age appearing in the face of that picture. And yet, notwithstanding these reasons, I am not without some hope that it may be his; because I know some eminent quakers have had their pictures privately drawn and deposited with trusty friends; and I know also that there is extant at Philadelphia, a very good picture of Mrs. Penn, his last wife. After all, I own I have a strong desire to be

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satisfied concerning this picture; and as Bevan is yet living here, and some other old quakers that remember William Penn, who died but 1718, I would wish to have it sent to me carefully packed up in a box by the wagon, (for I would not trust it by sea,) that I may obtain their opinion. The charges I shall very cheerfully pay; and if it proves to be Penn's picture, I shall be greatly obliged to your lordship for leave to take a copy of it, and will carefully return the original.

My son joins with me in the most respectful compliments to you and lady Kames. Our conversation till we came to York, was chiefly a recollection of what we had seen and heard, the pleasure we had enjoyed, and the kindnesses we had received in Scotland, and how far that country had exceeded our expectations. On the whole, I must say, I think the time we spent there, was six weeks of the *densest* happiness I have met with in any part of my life: and the agreeable and instructive society we found there in such plenty, has left so pleasing an impression on my memory, that did not strong connections draw me elsewhere, I believe Scotland would be the country I should choose to spend the remainder of my days in.

I have the honour to be,
With the sincerest esteem and affection,
My dear lord, &c. &c.,
B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

London, May 3, 1766.

My Dear Lord,

I HAVE endeavoured to comply with your request in writing something on the present situation of our affairs in America, in order to give more correct notions of the British interest with regard to the colonies, than those I found many sensible men possessed of. Inclosed you have the production,

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such as it is. I wish it may, in any degree, be of service to the public. I shall at least hope this from it, for my own part, that you will consider it as a letter from me to you, and take its length as some excuse for being so long a-coming.

I am now reading with great pleasure and improvement your excellent work, *The Principles of Equity*. It will be of the greatest advantage to the judges in our colonies, not only in those which have courts of chancery, but also in those which, having no such courts, are obliged to mix equity with common law. It will be of more service to the colony judges, as few of them have been bred to the law. I have sent a book to a particular friend, one of the judges of the Supreme Court in Pennsylvania.

I will shortly send you a copy of the chapter you are pleased to mention in so obliging a manner; and shall be extremely obliged in receiving a copy of the collection of *Maxims for the Conduct of Life*, which you are preparing for the use of your children. I purpose likewise a little work for the benefit of youth, to be called the *Art of Virtue*. From the title I think you will hardly conjecture what the nature of such a book may be. I must therefore explain it a little. Many people lead bad lives that would gladly lead good ones, but know not *how* to make the change. They have frequently *resolved* and *endeavoured* it; but in vain, because their endeavours have not been properly conducted. To expect people to be good, to be just, to be temperate, &c. without *showing* them *how* they should *become* so, seems like the ineffectual charity mentioned by the apostle, which consisted in saying to the hungry, the cold, and the naked, be ye fed, be ye warmed, be ye clothed, without showing them how they should get food, fire, or clothing. Most people have naturally *some* virtues, but none have naturally *all* the virtues. To *acquire* those that are wanting, and secure what we acquire, as well as those we have naturally, is the subject of *an art*. It is as properly an art as painting, navigation, or architecture.—If a man would become a painter, navigator, or architect, it is not enough that he is *advised* to be one, that he is *convinced*

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by the arguments of his adviser, that it would be for his advantage to be one, and that he resolves to be one, but he must also be taught the principles of the art, be shewn all the methods of working, and how to acquire the habits of using properly all the instruments; and thus regularly and gradually he arrives by practice at some perfection in the art. If he does not proceed thus, he is apt to meet with difficulties that discourage him, and make him drop the pursuit. My *Art of Virtue* has also its instruments, and teaches the manner of using them. Christians are directed to have faith in Christ, as the effectual means of obtaining the change they desire. It may, when sufficiently strong, be effectual with many: for a full opinion, that a teacher is infinitely wise, good, and powerful, and that he will certainly reward and punish the obedient and disobedient, must give great weight to his precepts, and make them much more attended to by his disciples. But many have this faith in so weak a degree, that it does not produce the effect. Our *Art of Virtue* may, therefore, be of great service to those whose faith is unhappily not so strong, and may come in aid of its weakness. Such as are naturally well-disposed, and have been carefully educated, as that good habits have been early established, and bad ones prevented, have less need of this art; but all may be more or less benefited by it. It is, in short, to be adopted for universal use. I imagine what I have now been writing will seem to savour of great presumption: I must therefore speedily finish my little piece, and communicate the manuscript to you, that you may judge whether it is possible to make good such pretensions. I shall at the same time hope for the benefit of your corrections.

I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Miss Stevenson, at Wanstead.

Craven street, May 16, 1760.

I SEND my good girl the books I mentioned to her last night. I beg her to accept of them as a small mark of my esteem and friendship. They are written in the familiar easy manner for which the French are so remarkable; and afford a good deal of philosophic and practical knowledge, unembarrassed with the dry mathematics used by more exact reasoners, but which is apt to discourage young beginners.

I would advise you to read with a pen in your hand, and enter in a little book short hints of what you find that is curious, or that may be useful; for this will be the best method of imprinting such particulars in your memory, where they will be ready, either for practice on some future occasion, if they are matters of utility; or at least to adorn and improve your conversation, if they are rather points of curiosity. And as many of the terms of science are such as you cannot have met with in your common reading, and may therefore be unacquainted with, I think it would be well for you to have a good dictionary at hand, to consult immediately when you meet with a word you do not comprehend the precise meaning of. This may at first seem troublesome and interrupting; but it is a trouble that will daily diminish, as you will daily find less and less occasion for your dictionary, as you become more acquainted with the terms; and in the mean time you will read with more satisfaction, because with more understanding. When any point occurs, in which you would be glad to have farther information than your book affords you, I beg you would not in the least apprehend, that I should think it a trouble to receive and answer your questions. It will be a pleasure, and no trouble. For though I may not be able, out of my own little stock of knowledge, to afford you what you require, I can easily direct you to the books, where it may most readily be found. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend,

Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To John Baskerville,[f] the Printer.

Craven street, London, 1760.

DEAR SIR,

LET me give you a pleasant instance of the prejudice some have entertained against your work. Soon after I returned, discoursing with a gentleman concerning the artists of Birmingham, he said you would be a means of blinding all the readers in the nation; for the strokes of your letters being too thin and narrow, hurt the eye, and he could never read a line of them, without pain. I thought, said I, you were going to complain of the gloss of the paper, which some object to. "No, no," said he, "I have heard that mentioned, but it is not that; it is in the form and cut of the letters themselves: they have not that height and thickness of the stroke, which makes the common printing so much the more comfortable to the eye:" You see this gentleman was a *connoisseur*. In vain I endeavoured to support your character against the charge; he knew what he felt, and could see the

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[f] John Baskerville, the celebrated type-founder and printer, was born in 1706, at Wolverley, in the county of Worcester. Having a small estate of about sixty pounds a-year, he was not bred to any profession; but in 1726 he became a schoolmaster at Birmingham, which he continued many years. Afterwards he entered upon the japanning business, which succeeded so well, as to enable him to purchase a country house and set up his carriage; each pannel of which was a distinct picture, and the whole might be considered as a pattern card of his trade. In 1750, he began business as a type-founder, on which he spent many hundreds before he could produce a letter to please himself. By perseverance he overcame all obstacles, and in 1756 published an edition of Virgil in quarto, which was followed by Paradise Lost, the Bible, Common Prayer, and several other works. In 1765, he applied to Dr. Franklin, then at Paris, to sound the literati there, respecting the purchase of his types, but the proposal was not accepted. They were many years after purchased by the celebrated M. de Beaumarchais, and employed in printing his edition of the works of Voltaire. Baskerville died at Birmingham, in 1775; and as he had an aversion to churchyards, he was by his own direction buried in a mausoleum erected on his own grounds.

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reason of it, and several other gentlemen among his friends had made the same observation, &c. Yesterday he called to visit me, when, mischievously bent to try his judgment, I stepped into my closet, tore off the top of Mr. Caslon's specimen, and produced it to him as yours, brought with me from Birmingham; saying, I had been examining it, since he spoke to me, and could not for my life perceive the disproportion he mentioned, desiring him to point it out to me. He readily undertook it, and went over the several founts, shewing me every where what he thought instances of that disproportion; and declared, that he could not then read the specimen, without feeling very strongly the pain he had mentioned to me. I spared him that time, the confusion of being told, that these were the types he had been reading all his life, with so much ease to his eyes; the types his adored Newton is printed with, on which he has pored not a little; nay, the very types his own book is printed with; (for he is himself an author) and yet never discovered this painful disproportion in them, till he thought they were yours.

I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Lord Kames.

Portsmouth, August 17, 1761.

My Dear Lord,

I AM now waiting here only for a wind to waft me to America, but cannot leave this happy island and my friends in it, without extreme regret, though I am going to a country and a people that I love. I a going from the old world to the new; and I fancy I feel like those who are leaving this world for the next; grief at the parting; fear of the passage; hope of the future: these different passions all affect their minds at once; and these have *tendered* me down exceedingly. It is usual for the dying to beg forgiveness of their surviving friends, if they have ever offended them. Can

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you, my lord, forgive my long silence, and my not acknowledging till now the favour you did me in sending me your excellent book? Can you make some allowance for a fault in others which you have never experienced in yourself; for the bad habit of postponing from day to day, what one every day resolves to do to-morrow? A habit that grows upon us with years, and whose only excuse is we know not how to mend it. If you are disposed to favour me, you will also consider how much one's mind is taken up and distracted, by the many little affairs one has to settle, before the undertaking such a voyage, after so long a residence in a country; and how little, in such a situation, one's mind is fitted for serious and attentive reading, which with regard to the *elements of criticism*, I intended before I should write. I can now only confess and endeavour to amend. In packing up my books, I have reserved yours, to read on the passage. I hope I shall therefore be able to write to you upon it soon after my arrival. At present I can only return my thanks, and say that the parts I have read gave me both pleasure and instruction; that I am convinced of your position, new as it was to me, that a good taste in the arts contributes to the improvement of morals; and that I have had the satisfaction of hearing the work universally commended by those who have read it.

And now, my dear sir, accept my sincere thanks for the kindness you have shown me, and my best wishes of happiness to you and yours. Wherever I am, I shall esteem the friendship you honour me with as one of the felicities of my life; I shall endeavour to cultivate it by a more punctual correspondence; and I hope frequently to hear of your welfare and prosperity.

Adieu my dear friend, and believe me ever most affectionately yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the same.

Craven street, London, June 2, 1765.

MY DEAR LORD,

I RECEIVED with great pleasure your friendly letter, by Mr. Alexander, which I should have answered sooner, by some other conveyance, if I had not understood that his stay here was like to be so long. I value myself extremely on the continuance of your regard, which I hope hereafter better to deserve, by more punctual returns in the correspondence you honour me with.

You require my history from the time I set sail for America. I left England about the end of August, 1762, in company with ten sail of merchant ships, under a convoy of a man of war. We had a pleasant passage to Madeira, where we were kindly received and entertained; our nation being then in high honour with the Portuguese, on account of the protection we were then affording them against the united invasions of France and Spain. 'Tis a fertile island, and the different heights and situations among its mountains, afford such temperaments of air, that all the fruits of northern and southern countries are produced there: corn, grapes, apples, peaches, oranges, lemons, plantains, bananas, &c. Here we furnished ourselves with fresh provisions, and refreshments of all kinds; and after a few days proceeded on our voyage, running southward until we got into the trade winds, and then with them westward, till we drew near the coast of America. The weather was so favourable that there were few days in which we could not visit from ship to ship, dining with each other, and on board of the man of war; which made the time pass agreeably, much more so than when one goes in a single ship; for this was like travelling in a moving village, with all one's neighbours about one. On the first of November, I arrived safe and well at my own home, after an absence of near six years, found my wife and daughter well; the latter grown quite a woman, with many amiable

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accomplishments acquired in my absence, and my friends as hearty and affectionate as ever: with whom my house was filled for many days, to congratulate me on my return. I had been chose yearly during my absence to represent the city of Philadelphia in our provincial assembly; and on my appearance in the house, they voted me three thousand pounds sterling for my services in England, and their thanks delivered by the speaker. In February following my son arrived with my new daughter; for with my consent and approbation he married soon after I left England, a very agreeable West India lady with whom he is very happy. I accompanied him to his government, where he met with the kindest reception from the people of all ranks, and has lived with them ever since in the greatest harmony. A river only parts that province and ours, and his residence is within seventeen miles of me, so that we frequently see each other. In the spring of 1763, I set out on a tour through all the northern colonies to inspect and regulate the Post Offices in the several provinces. In this journey I spent the summer, travelled about 1600 miles, and did not get home till the beginning of November. The assembly sitting through the following winter, and warm disputes arising between them and the governor, I became wholly engaged in public affairs; for besides my duty as an assemblyman, I had another trust to execute, that of being one of the commissioners appointed by law to dispose of the public money appropriated to the raising and paying an army to act against the Indians, and defend the frontiers. And then in December, we had two insurrections of the back inhabitants of our province, by whom twenty poor Indians were murdered, that had, from the first settlement of this province, lived among us, under the protection of our government. This gave me a good deal of employment; for as the rioters threatened further mischief, and their actions seemed to be approved by an ever-acting party; I wrote a pamphlet entitled "*A Narrative*, &c." (which I think I sent you) to strengthen the hands of our weak government, by rendering the proceedings of the rioters un-

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popular and odious. This had a good effect: and afterwards when a great body of them with arms marched towards the capital, in defiance of the government, with an avowed resolution to put to death one hundred and forty Indian converts then under its protection, I formed an association at the governor's request, for his and their defence, we having no militia. Near 1000 of the citizens accordingly took arms; governor Penn made my house for some time his head-quarters, and did every thing by my advice; so that for about forty-eight hours, I was a very great man; as I had been once some years before, in a time of public danger. But the fighting-face we put on, and the reasonings we used with the insurgents, (for I went at the request of the governor and council, with three others, to meet and discourse them) having turned them back and restored quiet to the city, I became a less man than ever: for I had by this transaction made myself many enemies among the populace; and the governor (with whose family our public disputes had long placed me in an unfriendly light, and the services I had lately rendered him not being of the kind that make a man acceptable) thinking it a favourable opportunity, joined the whole weight of the proprietary interest to get me out of the assembly; which was accordingly effected at the last election, by a majority of about twenty-five in 4000 voters. The house however, when they met in October, approved of the resolutions taken, while I was speaker, of petitioning the crown for a change of government, and requested me to return to England, to prosecute that petition; which service I accordingly undertook, and embarked the beginning of November last, being accompanied to the ship, sixteen miles, by a cavalcade of three hundred of my friends, who filled our sails with their good wishes, and I arrived in thirty days at London. Here I have been ever since, engaged in that and other public affairs relating to America, which are like to continue some time longer upon my hands; but I promise you that when I am quit of these, I will engage in no other; and that as soon as I have recovered the ease and leisure I hope for,

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the task you require of me, of finishing my *Art of Virtue*, shall be performed. In the mean time, I must request you would excuse me on this consideration, that the powers of the mind, are possessed by different men in different degrees, and that every one cannot, like lord Kames, intermix literary pursuits and important business without prejudice to either.

I send you herewith two or three other pamphlets of my writing on our political affairs, during my short residence in America; but I do not insist on your reading them; for I know you employ all your time to some useful purpose.

In my passage to America, I read your excellent work *The Elements of Criticism*, in which I found great entertainment: much to admire and nothing to reprove. I only wished you had examined more fully the subject of music, and demonstrated, that the pleasure which artists feel, in hearing much of that compiled in the modern taste, is not the natural pleasure arising from melody or harmony of sounds, but of the same kind with the pleasure we feel on seeing the surprising feats of tumblers and rope-dancers who execute difficult things. For my part, I take this to be really the case, and suppose it the reason why those, who being unpractised in music, and therefore unacquainted with those difficulties, have little or no pleasure in hearing this music. Many pieces of it are mere compositions of tricks. I have sometimes at a concert, attended by a common audience, placed myself so as to see all their faces, and observed no signs of pleasure during the performance of much that was admired by the performers themselves; while a plain old *Scottish tune*, which they disdained, and could scarcely be prevailed upon to play, gave manifest and general delight. Give me leave on this occasion to extend a little the sense of your position, that "Melody and harmony are separately agreeable, and in union delightful," and to give it as my opinion that the reason why the Scottish tunes have lived so long, and will probably live forever (if they escape being stifled in modern affected ornament,) is merely this, that they are really compsitions of me-

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lody and harmony united, or rather that their melody is harmony, I mean the simple tunes, sung by a single voice. As this will appear paradoxical, I must explain my meaning. In common acceptation indeed, only an agreeable *succession* of sounds is called melody; and only the *co-existence* of agreeing sounds, *harmony*. But since the memory is capable of retaining for some moments a perfect idea of the pitch of a past sound, so as to compare with it the pitch of a preceding sound, and judge truly of their agreement or disagreement, there may and does from thence arise a sense of harmony between present and past sounds, equally pleasing with that between two present sounds. Now the construction of the old Scotch tunes is this, that almost every preceding *emphatical* note, is a third, a fifth, an octave, or in short some note that is in concord with the preceding note. Thirds are chiefly used, which are very pleasing concords. I use the word *emphatical*, to distinguish those notes, which have a stress laid on them in singing the tune, from the lighter connecting notes, that serve merely like grammar articles to tack the others together. That we have a most perfect idea of sounds just past, I might appeal to all unacquainted with music, who know how easy it is to repeat a sound in the same pitch with one just heard. In tuning an instrument, a good ear can as easily determine that two strings are in unison, by sounding them separately, as by sounding them together; their disagreement is also as easily perceived. I believe I may say, more easily and better distinguished when sounded separately: for when sounded together, though you know by the beating, that one is higher than the other, you cannot tell which it is. Farther, when we consider by whom these ancient tunes were composed, and how they were first performed, we shall see that such harmonical succession of sounds was natural and even necessary in their construction. They were composed by the minstrels of those days, to be played on the harp accompanied by the voice. The harp was strung with wire, and had no contrivance, like that in the modern harpsichord, by which the sound of a preceding note could be stopt the moment a succeeding note began; to avoid *actual*

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discord, it was therefore necessary, that the preceding emphatic note, should be a chord with the preceding, as those sounds must exist at the same time. Hence arose that beauty in those tunes that has so long pleased, and will please for ever, though men scarce know why. That they were originally composed for the harp, and of the most simple kind,—I mean a harp without any half notes, but those in the natural scale, and with no more than two octaves of strings from C to C, I conjecture, from another circumstance, which is, that not one of those tunes really ancient has a single artificial half note in it; and that in tunes, where it was most convenient for the voice to use the middle note of the harp, and place the key in F, there the B, which if used should be a B flat, is always omitted by passing over it with a third. The connoisseurs in modern music, will say,--I have no taste; but I cannot help adding, that I believe our ancestors in hearing a good song distinctly articulated, sung to one of those tunes, and accompanied by the harp, felt more real pleasure than is communicated by the generality of modern operas, exclusive of that arising from the scenery and dancing. Most tunes of late composition, not having the natural harmony united with their melody, have recourse to the artificial harmony of a bass, and other accompanying parts. This support, in my opinion, the old tunes do not need, and are rather confused than aided by it. Whoever has heard *James Oswald* play them on his violincello, will be less inclined to dispute this with me. I have more than once seen tears of pleasure in the eyes of his auditors; and yet I think, even his playing those tunes would please more, if he gave them less modern ornament.

My son, when we parted, desired me to present his affectionate respects to you, lady Kames, and your amiable children; be so good, with those, to accept mine, and believe me with the sincerest esteem, my dear lord, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. I promise myself the pleasure of seeing you and my other friends in Scotland before I return to America.

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To the same.[s]

London, April 11, 1767.

MY DEAR LORD,

I RECEIVED your obliging favour of January the 19th. You have kindly relieved me from the pain I had long been under. You are goodness itself. I ought to have answered yours of December 25, 1765. I never received a letter that contained sentiments more suitable to my own. It found me under much agitation of mind on the very important subject it treated. It fortified me greatly in the judgment I was inclined to form (though contrary to the general vogue) on the then delicate and critical situation of affairs between Great Britain and the colonies, and on that weighty point, their *union*. You guessed aright in supposing that I would not be a *mute in that play*. I was extremely busy, attending members of both houses, informing, explaining, consulting, disputing, in a continual hurry from morning to night, till the affair was happily ended. During the course of its being called before the house of commons, I spoke my mind pretty freely. Inclosed, I send you the imperfect account that was taken of that examination: you will there see how entirely we agree, except in a point of fact, of which you could not but be misinformed; the papers at that time being full of mistaken assertions, that the colonies had been the cause of the war, and had ungratefully refused to bear any part of the expense of it. I send it you now, because I apprehend some late accidents are likely to revive the contest between the two countries. I fear it will be a mischievous one. It becomes a matter of great importance, that clear ideas should be formed on solid principles, both in Britain and America, of the true political relation between them, and the mutual duties belong-

[s] Lord Kames had written to Dr. Franklin as early as 1765, when the first advices reached England of the disorders occasioned by the attempts to carry the stamp act into execution; and he had written a second letter to him on the same subject in the beginning of 1767. This is a copy of Dr. Franklin's answer to these letters.

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ing to that relation. Till this is done, they will be often jarring. I know none whose knowledge, sagacity, and impartiality qualify him so thoroughly for such a service as yours do you. I wish therefore you would consider it. You may thereby be the happy instrument of great good to the nation, and of preventing much mischief and bloodshed. I am fully persuaded with you, that a *consolidating union*, by a fair and equal representation of all the parts of this empire in parliament, is the only firm basis on which its political grandeur and prosperity can be founded. Ireland once wished it, but now rejects it. The time has been, when the colonies might have been pleased with it: they are now *indifferent* about it; and if it is much longer delayed they too will *refuse* it. But the pride of this people cannot bear the thought of it, and therefore it will be delayed. Every man in England seems to consider himself as a piece of a sovereign over America; seems to jostle himself into the throne with the king, and talks of *our subjects in the colonies*. The parliament cannot well and wisely make laws suited to the colonies, without being properly and truly informed of their circumstances, abilities, temper, &c. This it cannot be without representatives from thence; and yet it is fond of this power, and averse to the only means of acquiring the necessary knowledge for exercising it; which is desiring to be *omnipotent*, without being *omniscient*.

I have mentioned that the contest is likely to be revived. It is on this occasion: in the same session with the stamp act, an act was passed to regulate the quartering of soldiers in America; when the bill was first brought in, it contained a clause, empowering the officers to quarter their soldiers in private houses; this we warmly opposed, and got it omitted. The bill passed, however, with a clause, that empty houses, barns, &c. should be hired for them; and that the respective provinces, where they were, should pay the expense and furnish firing, bedding, drink, and some other articles to the soldiers, *gratis*. There is no way for any province to do this

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but by the assembly's making a law to raise the money. Pennsylvania assembly has made such a law; New York assembly has refused to do it: and now all the talk here is, of sending a force to compel them.

The reasons given by the assembly to the governor for the refusal, are, that they understand the act to mean the furnishing such things to soldiers, only while on their march through the country, and not to great bodies of soldiers, to be fixt, as at present, in the province; the burthen in the latter case being greater than the inhabitants can bear: that it would put it in the power of the captain-general to oppress the province at pleasure, &c. But there is supposed to be another reason at bottom, which they intimate, though they do not plainly express it; to wit, that it is of the nature of an *internal tax* laid on them by parliament, which has no right so to do. Their refusal is here called *rebellion*, and punishment is thought of.

Now waving that point of right, and supposing the legislatures in America subordinate to the legislature of Great Britain, one might conceive, I think, a power in the superior legislature to forbid the inferior legislatures making particular laws; but to enjoin it to make a particular law, contrary to its own judgment, seems improper; an assembly or parliament not being an *executive* officer of government, whose duty it is, in law making, to obey orders, but a *deliberative* body, who are to consider what comes before them, its propriety, practicability, or possibility, and to determine accordingly; the very nature of a parliament seems to be destroyed, by supposing it may be bound and compelled by a law of a superior parliament, to make a law contrary to its own judgment.

Indeed the act of parliament in question has not, as in other acts, when a duty is enjoined, directed a penalty on neglect or refusal, and a mode of recovering that penalty. It seems therefore, to the people in America as a mere requisition, which they are at liberty to comply with or not, as it may suit or not suit the different circumstances of the different provinces.

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Pennsylvania has therefore voluntarily complied. New York, as I said before, has refused. The ministry that made the act, and all their adherents, call for vengeance. The present ministry are perplexed, and the measures they will finally take on the occasion are yet unknown. But sure I am that if *force* is used, great mischief will ensue; the affections of the people of America to this country will be alienated; your commerce will be diminished; and a total separation of interests be the final consequence.

It is a common, but mistaken notion here, that the colonies were planted at the expense of parliament, and that therefore the parliament has a right to tax them, &c. The truth is, they were planted at the expense of private adventurers, who went over there to settle, with leave of the king, given by charter. On receiving this leave, and those charters, the adventurers voluntarily engaged to remain the king's subjects, though in a foreign country; a country which had not been conquered by either king or parliament, but was possessed by a free people.

When our planters arrived, they purchased the lands of the natives, without putting king or parliament to any expense. Parliament had no hand in their settlement, was never so much as consulted about their constitution, and took no kind of notice of them, till many years after they were established. I except only the two modern colonies, or rather attempts to make colonies (for they succeed but poorly, and as yet hardly deserve the name of colonies) I mean Georgia and Nova Scotia, which have hitherto been little better than parliamentary jobs. Thus all the colonies acknowledge the king as their sovereign; his governors there represent his person: laws are made by their assemblies or little parliaments, with the governor's assent, subject still to the king's pleasure to affirm or annul them. Suits arising in the colonies, and between colony and colony, are determined by the king in council. In this view they seem so many separate little states, subject to the same prince. The sovereignty of the king is therefore easily understood. But nothing is more common

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here than to talk of the *sovereignty* of PARLIAMENT, and the sovereignty of this nation over the colonies; a kind of sovereignty, the idea of which is not so clear, nor does it clearly appear on what foundation it is established. On the other hand it seems necessary for the common good of the empire, that a power be lodged somewhere, to regulate its general commerce; this can be placed no where so properly as in the parliament of Great Britain; and therefore, though that power has in some instances been executed with great partiality to Britain, and prejudice to the colonies, they have nevertheless always submitted to it. Custom houses are established in all of them, by virtue of laws made here, and the duties instantly paid, except by a few smugglers, such as are here and in all countries; but internal taxes laid on them by parliament, are still and ever will be objected to, for the reason that you will see in the mentioned examination.

Upon the whole, I have lived so great a part of my life in Britain, and have formed so many friendships in it, that I love it, and sincerely wish it prosperity; and therefore wish to see that union, on which alone I think it can be secured and established. As to America, the advantages of such an union to her are not so apparent. She may suffer at present under the arbitrary power of this country; she may suffer for a while in a separation from it; but these are temporary evils which she will out-grow. Scotland and Ireland, are differently circumstanced. Confined by the sea, they can scarcely increase in numbers, wealth and strength, so as to overbalance England. But America, an immense territory, favoured by nature, with all advantages of climate, soils, great navigable rivers, lakes, &c. must become a great country, populous and mighty; and will, in a less time than is generally conceived, be able to shake off any shackles that may be imposed upon her, and perhaps place them on the imposers. In the mean time every act of oppression will sour their tempers, lessen greatly if not annihilate the profits of your commerce with them, and hasten their final revolt; for the seeds of liberty are universally found there, and nothing can eradi-

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cate them. And yet there remains among that people, so much respect, veneration, and affection for Britain, that if cultivated prudently, with a kind usage and tenderness for their privileges, they might be easily governed still for ages, without force or any considerable expense. But I do not see here a sufficient quantity of the wisdom that is necessary to produce such a conduct, and I lament the want of it.

I borrowed at Millar's the new edition of your *Principles of Equity*, and have read with great pleasure the preliminary discourse on the principles of morality. I have never before met with any thing so satisfactory on the subject. While reading it, I made a few remarks as I went along. They are not of much importance, but I send you the paper.

I know the lady you mention (Mrs. Montague); having, when in England before, met her once or twice at lord Bath's. I remember I then entertained the same opinion of her that you express. On the strength of your recommendation, I purpose soon to wait on her.

This is unexpectedly grown a long letter. The visit to Scotland, and the *Art of Virtue* we will talk of hereafter. It is now time to say, that I am, with increasing esteem and affection;

My dear friend,

Yours, ever,

B. FRANKLIN,[h]

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[h] This letter was intercepted by the British ministry; Dr. F. had preserved a copy of it, which was afterwards transmitted to lord Kames; but the wisdom which composed and conveyed it was thrown away upon the men at that time in power.

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To Lord Kames.

London, February 21, 1769.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your excellent paper on the preferable use of oxen in agriculture, and have put it in the way of being communicated to the public here. I have observed in America, that the farmers are more thriving in those parts of the country where horned cattle are used, than in those where the labour is done by horses. The latter are said to require twice the quantity of land to maintain them; and after all are not good to eat—at least we don't think them so. Here is a waste of land that might afford subsistence for so many of the human species. Perhaps it was for this reason that the Hebrew lawgiver having promised that the children of Israel should be as numerous as the sands of the sea, not only took care to secure the health of individuals, by regulating their diet, that they might be fitter for producing children, but also forbid their using horses, as those animals would lessen the quantity of subsistence for men. Thus we find, when they took any horses from their enemies, they destroyed them; and in the commandments, where the labour of the ox and ass is mentioned, and forbidden on the sabbath, there is no mention of the horse, probably because they were to have none. And by the great armies suddenly raised in that small territory they inhabited, it appears to have been very full of people.[k]

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[k] There is not in the Jewish law any express prohibition against the use of horses: it is only enjoined, that the kings should not multiply the breed, or carry on trade with Egypt for the purchase of horses. Deut. xvii. 16. Solomon was the first of the kings of Judah who disregarded this ordinance. He had 40,000 stalls of horses, which he brought out of Egypt. 1 Kings, iv. 26. and *ibid* x. 28. From this time downwards, horses were in constant use in the Jewish armies. It is true that the country, from its rocky surface and unfertile soil, was extremely unfit for the maintenance of those animals. *Note by lord Kames.*

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Food is *always* necessary to *all*, and much the greatest part of the labour of mankind is employed in raising provisions for the mouth. Is not this kind of labour then, the fittest to be the standard by which to measure the values of all other labour, and consequently of all other things whose value depends on the labour of making or procuring them? may not even gold and silver be thus valued! if the labour of the farmer in producing a bushel of wheat, be equal to the labor of the miner in producing an ounce of silver, will not the bushel of wheat just measure the value of the ounce of silver. The miner must eat; the farmer indeed can live without the ounce of silver, and so perhaps will have some advantage in settling the price. But these discussions I leave to you, as being more able to manage them: only, I will send you a little scrap I wrote some time since on the laws prohibiting foreign commodities.

I congratulate you on your election as president of your Edinburg Society. I think I formerly took notice to you in conversation, that I thought there had been some similarity in our fortunes, and the circumstances of our lives. This is a fresh instance, for by letters just received, I find that I was about the same time chosen president of our American Philosophical Society, established at Philadelphia.[1]

I have sent by sea, to the care of Mr. Alexander, a little

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[1] The American Philosophical Society was instituted in 1769, and was formed by the union of two societies which had formerly subsisted at Philadelphia, whose views and objects were of a similar nature. Its members were classed in the following committees:

1. Geography, Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Astronomy.
2. Medicine and Anatomy.
3. Natural History and Chemistry.
4. Trade and Commerce.
5. Mechanics and Architecture.
6. Husbandry, and American Improvements.

And several volumes have been published of the transactions of this American Society in which are many papers by Dr. Franklin.

Note by lord Kames.

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box, containing a few copies of the late edition of my books, for my friends in Scotland. One is directed for you, and one for your society, which I beg that you and they would accept as a small mark of my respect. With the sincerest esteem and regard,

I am, my dear friend,
Yours most affectionately,
B. FRANKLIN.

PS. I am sorry my letter of 1767, concerning the American disputes miscarried. I now send you a copy of it from my book. The examination mentioned in it you have probably seen. Things daily wear a worse aspect, and tend more and more to a breach and final separation.

To John Alleyne, Esq.

Craven street, August 9, 1768.

DEAR JACK,

YOU desire, you say, my impartial thoughts on the subject of an early marriage, by way of answer to the numberless objections that have been made by numerous persons to your own. You may remember, when you consulted me on the occasion, that I thought youth on both sides to be no objection. Indeed, from the marriages that have fallen under my observation, I am rather inclined to think, that early ones stand the best chance of happiness. The temper and habits of the young are not yet become so stiff and uncomplying, as when more advanced in life; they form more easily to each other, and hence many occasions of disgust are removed. And if youth has less of that prudence which is necessary to manage a family, yet the parents and elder friends of young married persons are generally at hand to afford their advice, which amply supplies that defect; and by early marriage, youth is sooner formed to regular and useful life; and possibly some of those accidents or connections,

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that might have injured the constitution, or reputation, or both, are thereby happily prevented. Particular circumstances of particular persons, may possibly sometimes make it prudent to delay entering into that state; but in general when nature has rendered our bodies fit for it, the presumption is in nature's favour, that she has not judged amiss in making us desire it. Late marriages are often attended, too, with this further inconvenience, that there is not the same chance that the parents shall live to see their offspring educated. "*Late children,*" says the Spanish proverb, "*are early orphans.*" A melancholy reflection to those whose case it may be! With us in America, marriages are generally in the morning of life; our children are therefore educated and settled in the world by noon; and thus, our business being done, we have an afternoon and evening of cheerful leisure to ourselves; such as our friend at present enjoys. By these early marriages we are blessed with more children; and from the mode among us, founded by nature, of every mother suckling and nursing her own child, more of them are raised. Thence the swift progress of population among us, unparalleled in Europe. In fine, I am glad you are married, and congratulate you most cordially upon it. You are now in the way of becoming a useful citizen; and you have escaped the unnatural state of celibacy for life—the fate of many here, who never intended it, but who having too long postponed the change of their condition, find at length, that it is too late to think of it, and so live all their lives in a situation that greatly lessens a man's value. An odd volume of a set of books, bears not the value of its proportion to the set: what think you of the odd half of a pair of scissars? it can't well cut any thing; it may possibly serve to scrape a trencher.

Pray make my compliments and best wishes acceptable to your bride. I am old and heavy, or I should ere this have presented them in person. I shall make but small use of the old man's privilege that of giving advice to younger friends. Treat your wife always with respect; it will procure respect to you, not only from her, but from all that observe it. Never

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use a slighting expression to her, even in jest, for slights in jest, after frequent bandyings are apt to end in angry earnest. Be studious in your profession, and you will be learned. Be industrious and frugal and you will be rich. Be sober and temperate, and you will be healthy. Be in general virtuous, and you will be happy. At least, you will, by such conduct, stand the best chance for such consequences.

I pray God to bless you both; being ever your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Michael Collinson, Esq.

[*No date.*] (*supposed to be in* 1768 *or* 1769.)

DEAR SIR,

UNDERSTANDING that an account of our dear departed friend, Mr. Peter Collinson,[1] is intended to be given to the public, I cannot omit expressing my approbation of the design. The characters of good men are exemplary, and often stimulate the well disposed to an imitation, beneficial to mankind, and honourable to themselves. And as you may be unacquainted with the following instances of his zeal and

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[1] PETER COLLINSON, F. R. S. a very celebrated botanist, was descended from a family of ancient standing in the county of Westmoreland, but born himself in 1693, in Clement's lane, Lombard street. His parents realized a handsome fortune by trade in Gracechurch street, the bulk of which coming to Peter, who was the eldest son, he was enabled to follow his favourite pursuit of natural history. He had one of the finest gardens in England, at Peckham, in Surrey, whence he removed in 1749 to Mill Hill, in the parish of Hendon in Middlesex, where he died in 1768. Mr. Collinson kept up a correspondence with men of science in all parts of the world, and he sent the first electrical machine that was ever seen in America, as a present to the Philosophical Society at Philadelphia. He was also a liberal contributor to the public library of that city; and an intimate friend of Dr. Franklin, who received from him many hints and papers on the subject of electricity.

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usefulness in promoting knowledge, which fell within my observation, I take the liberty of informing you, that in 1730, a subscription library being set on foot at Philadelphia, he encouraged the design by making several very valuable presents to it, and procuring others from his friends: and as the library company had a considerable sum arising annually to be laid out in books, and needed a judicious friend in London to transact the business for them, he voluntarily and cheerfully undertook that service, and executed it for more than thirty years successively, assisting in the choice of books, and taking the whole care of collecting and shipping them, without ever charging or accepting any consideration for his trouble. The success of this library (greatly owing to his kind countenance and good advice) encouraged the erecting others in different places on the same plan; and it is supposed there are now upwards of thirty subsisting in the several colonies, which have contributed greatly to the spreading of useful knowledge in that part of the world; the books he recommended being all of that kind, and the catalogue of this first library being much respected and followed by those libraries that succeeded.

During the same time he transmitted to the directors of the library the earliest accounts of every new European improvement in agriculture and the arts, and every philosophical discovery; among which, in 1745, he sent over an account of the new German experiments in electricity, together with a glass tube, and some directions for using it, so as to repeat those experiments. This was the first notice I had of that curious subject which I afterwards prosecuted with some diligence, being encouraged by the friendly reception he gave to the letters I wrote to him upon it. Please to accept this small testimony of mine to his memory, for which I shall ever have the utmost respect; and believe me, with sincere esteem, dear sir, your most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Michael Hillegas, Esq., Philadelphia.

London, March 17, 1770.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your favour of November 25, and have made inquiries, as you desired, concerning the copper covering of houses. It has been used here in a few instances only, and the practice does not seem to gain ground. The copper is about the thickness of a common playing card, and though a dearer metal than lead, I am told that as less weight serves, on account of its being so much thinner, and as slighter woodwork in the roof is sufficient to support it, the roof is not dearer, on the whole, than one covered with lead. It is said that hail and rain make a disagreeable drumming noise on copper; but this, I suppose, is rather fancy; for the plates being fastened to the rafters, must, in a great measure, deaden such sound. The first cost, whatever it is, will be all, as a copper covering must last for ages; and when the house decays, the plates will still have intrinsic worth. In Russia, I am informed, many houses are covered with plates of iron tinned, (such as our tin pots and other wares are made of,) laid on over the edges of one another, like tiles; and which, it is said, last very long; the tin preserving the iron from much decay by rusting. In France and the Low Countries I have seen many spouts or pipes for conveying the water down from the roofs of houses, made of the same kind of tin plates, soldered together; and they seem to stand very well.

With sincere regard, I am yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Samuel Rhoads, Esq.

London, June 26, 1770.

DEAR FRIEND,

IT is a long time since I had the pleasure of hearing from you directly. Mrs. Franklin has, indeed, now and then ac-

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quainted me of your welfare, which I am always glad to hear of. It is, I fear, partly, if not altogether, my fault that our correspondence has not been regularly continued. One thing I am sure of, that it has been from no want of regard on either side, but rather from too much business, and avocations of various kinds, and my having little of importance to communicate.

One of our good citizens, Mr. Hillegas, anxious for the future safety of our town, wrote to me some time since, desiring I would inquire concerning the covering of houses here with copper. I sent him the best information I could then obtain,* but have since received the inclosed from an

* The carpentry of the roof being formed with its proper descents, is, in the first place, sheltered or covered with deals, nailed upon the plane of the rafters, after the same manner as when intended to be covered with lead. The sheets of the copper for this covering are two feet by four, and for covering the slopes of the roof are cast so thin as to weigh eight or nine pounds, and for covering the flats or gutters, ten or eleven pounds each, or about one pound, or a pound and a quarter to the superficial foot.

A string of strong cartridge paper (over-lapping a little at its joints) is regularly tacked down upon the sheeting of wood, under the copper covering, as the work proceeds from eaves to ridge. It prevents the jingling sound of hail or rain falling upon the roof, and answers another purpose, to be mentioned by and by.

In order to shew the regular process of laying down the roof, we must begin with fastening two sheets together lengthwise. The edges of two sheets are laid down so as to lap or cover each other an inch, and a slip of the same copper, about three and a half inches broad, called the reeve, is introduced between them. Four oblong holes or slits, are then cut or punched through the whole, and they are fastened or riveted together by copper nails, with small round shanks and flat heads. Indents are then cut ½ inch deep upon the seam at top and bottom. The right-hand sheet and the reeve are then folded back to the left. The reeve is then folded to the right, and the sheets being laid on the roof in their place, it is nailed down to the sheeting with flat-headed short copper nails. The right-hand sheet is then folded over the reeve to the right, and the whole beat down flat upon the cartridge paper covering the sheeting, and thus they are fastened and laid in their places, by nailing down the reeve only; and by reason of the oblong holes through them

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ingenious friend, who is what they call here a civil engineer. I should be glad you would peruse it, think of the matter a little and give me your sentiments of it. When you have done with the paper, please to give it to Mr. Hillegas. I am told by lord Despencer, who has covered a long piazza, or gallery with copper, that the expense is charged in this account too high, for his cost but one shilling and ten pence per foot, all charges included. I suppose his copper must have been thinner. And, indeed, it is so strong a metal, that I think it may well be used very thin.

It appears to me of great importance to build our dwelling-houses, if we can, in a manner more secure from danger by fire. We scarcely ever hear of fire in Paris. When I was there, I took particular notice of the construction of their houses, and I did not see how one of them could well be burnt. The roofs are slate or tile, the walls are stone, the rooms generally lined with stucco or plaster instead of wainscot, the floors of stucco, or of six-sided tiles painted brown,

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and the reeve, have a little liberty to expand or contract with the heat and cold, without raising themselves up from the sheeting, or tearing themselves or the fastening to pieces. Two other sheets are then fixed together, according to the first and second operations above, and their seam, with the reeve, introduced under the upper ends of the seam of the former, so as to cover down about two inches upon the upper ends of the former sheets; and so far the cartridge paper is allowed to cover the two first sheets. This edge of the paper is dipt in oil, or in turpentine, so far before its application, and thus a body between the sheets is formed impenetrable to wet; and the reeve belonging to the two last sheets is nailed down to the sheeting as before, and the left-hand sheet is turned down to the right. Four sheets are now laid down, with the seam or joint rising to the ridge; and thus the work is continued, both vertically and horizontally, till the roof be covered, the sides and ends of each sheet being alternately each way, undermost and uppermost.

The price for copper, nails, and workmanship, runs at about eight pounds ten shillings per cwt. or two shillings and three pence per foot superficial, exclusive of the lappings; and about two shillings and eight pence per foot upon the whole; which is rather above half as much more as the price of doing it well with lead.

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or of flag stone, or of marble; if any floors were of wood, they were of oak wood, which is not so inflammable as pine. Carpets prevent the coldness of stone or brick floors offending the feet in winter, and the noise of treading on such floors, overhead, is less inconvenient than on boards. The stairs too, at Paris, are either stone or brick, with only a wooden edge or corner for the step; so that, on the whole, though the Parisians commonly burn wood in their chimneys, a more dangerous kind of fuel than that used here, yet their houses escape extremely well, as there is little in a room that can be consumed by fire except the furniture; whereas in London, perhaps scarcely a year passes in which half a million of property and many lives are not lost by this destructive element. Of late indeed, they begin here to leave off wainscoting their rooms, and instead of it cover the walls with stucco, often formed into pannels, like wainscot, which, being painted, is very strong and warm. Stone staircases too, with iron rails, grow more and more into fashion here. But stone steps cannot, in some circumstances be fixed; and there, methinks, oak is safer than pine; and I assure you, that in many genteel houses here, both old and new, the stairs and floors are oak, and look extremely well. Perhaps solid oak for the steps would be still safer than boards; and two steps might be cut diagonally out of one piece. Excuse my talking to you on a subject with which you must be so much better acquainted than I am. It is partly to make out a letter, and partly in hope that by turning your attention to the point, some methods of greater security in our future building may be thought of and promoted by you, whose judgment I know has deservedly great weight with our fellow citizens. For though our town has not hitherto suffered very greatly by fire, yet I am apprehensive that some time or other, by a concurrence of unlucky circumstances, such as dry weather, hard frost, and high winds, a fire then happening may suddenly spread far and wide over our cedar roofs, and do us immense mischief. I am, yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

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To Governor Franklin,[m] *New Jersey.*

London, August 19, 1772.

IN yours of May 14th, you acquaint me with your indisposition, which gave me great concern. The resolution you have taken to use more exercise is extremely proper; and I hope you will steadily perform it. It is of the greatest importance to prevent diseases, since the cure of them by physic is so very precarious. In considering the different kinds of exercise, I have thought that the *quantum* of each is to be judged of, not by time or by distance, but by the degree of warmth it produces in the body: thus, when I observe if I am cold when I get into a carriage in a morning, I may ride all day without being warmed by it; that if on horseback my feet are cold, I may ride some hours before they become warm; but if I am ever so cold on foot I cannot walk an hour briskly, without glowing from head to foot by the quickened circulation; I have been ready to say, (using round numbers without regard to exactness, but merely to make a great difference) that there is more exercise in *one* mile's riding on horseback, than *five* in a coach; and more in *one* mile's walking on foot, than in *five* on horseback; to which I may add, that there is more in walking *one* mile up and down stairs, than in *five* on a level floor.—The two latter exercises may be had within doors, when the weather discourages going abroad; and the last may be had when one is pinched for time, as containing a great quantity of exercise in a handful of minutes. The dumb bell is another exercise of the latter compendious kind; by the use of it I have in forty swings quickened my pulse from sixty to one hundred beats in a minute, counted by a second watch: and I suppose the warmth generally increases with quickness of pulse.

B. FRANKLIN.

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[m] Dr. Franklin's son, to whom the first part of the Memoirs of his Life is addressed. See Vol. I.

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To Mr. Anthony Benezet,[a] *Philadelphia.*

London, August 22, 1772.

DEAR FRIEND,

I MADE a little extract from yours of April 27, of the number of slaves imported and perishing, with some close remarks on the hypocrisy of this country, which encourages such a detestable commerce by laws for promoting the Guinea trade; while it piqued itself on its virtue, love of liberty, and the equity of its courts in setting free a single negro. This was inserted in the *London Chronicle, of the 20th of June* last.—I thank you for the Virginia address, which I shall also publish with some remarks. I am glad to hear that the disposition against keeping negroes grows more general in North America. Several pieces have been lately printed here against the practice, and I hope in time it will be taken into consideration and suppressed by the legislature. Your labours have already been attended with great effects: I hope therefore you and your friends will be encouraged to proceed: my hearty wishes of success attend you, being ever, my dear friend,

Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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[a] An American philanthropist. In 1767, he wrote a caution to Great Britain and her Colonies, in a short representation of the calamitous state of the enslaved negroes in the British dominions. In 1772, he published Historical Accounts of Guinea; with an Inquiry into the Rise and Progress of the Slave Trade, its nature and lamentable effects. This amiable man seemed to have nothing else at heart, but the good of his fellow-creatures; and the last act of his life was to take from his desk six dollars for a poor widow.

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To Dr. Priestley.

DEAR SIR, *London, September* 19, 1772.

IN the affair of so much importance to you, wherein you ask my advice, I cannot for want of sufficient premises, counsel you *what* to determine; but if you please, I will tell you *how*. When those difficult cases occur, they are difficult chiefly because, while we have them under consideration, all the reasons, *pro*, and *con*, are not present to the mind at the same time; but sometimes one set present themselves; and at other times another, the first being out of sight. Hence the various purposes or inclinations that alternately prevail, and the uncertainty that perplexes us. To get over this, my way is, to divide half a sheet of paper by a line into two columns; writing over the one *pro*, and over the other *con:* then during three or four days consideration, I put down under the different heads, short hints of the different motives that at different times occur to me, *for* or *against* the measure. When I have thus got them all together in one view, I endeavour to estimate their respective weights, and where I find two, (one on each side) that seem equal, I strike them both out. If I find a reason *pro* equal to some *two* reasons *con*, I strike out the *three*. If I judge some *two* reasons *con*, equal to some *three* reasons *pro*, I strike out the *five;* and thus proceeding I find at length where the *balance* lies; and if after a day or two of farther consideration, nothing new that is of importance occurs on either side, I come to a determination accordingly. And though the weight of reasons cannot be taken with the precision of algebraic quantities; yet, when each is thus considered separately and comparatively, and the whole lies before me, I think I can judge better, and am less liable to make a rash step; and in fact I have found great advantage from this kind of equation, in what may be called *moral* or *prudential algebra.*

Wishing sincerely that you may determine for the best, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Mr. Mather.

London, July 7, 1773.

REVEREND SIR,

BY a line of the 4th past, I acknowledged the receipt of your favour of March 18, and sent you with it two pamphlets. I now add another, a spirited address to the Bishops who opposed the dissenters' petition. It is written by a dissenting minister at York. There is preserved at the end of it, a little fugitive piece of mine on the same occasion.

I perused your tracts with pleasure: I see you inherit all the various learning of your famous ancestors, *Cotton* and *Increase Mather*. The father *Increase*, I once heard preach at the Old South Meeting for Mr. Pemberton; and I remember his mentioning the death of "that wicked old persecutor of God's people, Lewis the XIV;" of which news had just been received; but which proved premature. I was some years afterwards at his house at the North End on some errand to him, and remember him sitting in an easy chair apparently very old and feeble. But *Cotton* I remember in the vigor of his preaching and usefulness.

You have made the most of your argument, to prove that America might be known to the ancients. There is another discovery of it claimed by the Norwegians, which you have not mentioned, unless it be under the words "of old viewed and observed," page 7. About twenty-five years since, professor Kalm, a learned Swede, was with us in Pennsylvania. He contended, that America was discovered by their northern people, long before the time of Columbus; which I doubting, he drew up and gave me some time after, a note of those discoveries, which I send you inclosed. It is his own hand-writing, and his own English; very intelligible for the time he had been among us. The circumstances give the account a great appearance of authenticity. And if one may judge by the description of the winter, the country they visited should be southward of New England, supposing no change since that time of the climate. But if it be true as Krantz, I think, and some other historians tell us, that old Greenland, once

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inhabited and populous, is now rendered uninhabited by ice, it should seem that almost perpetual northern winter had gained ground to the southward; and if so, perhaps more northern countries might anciently have had vines, than can bear them in these days.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Samuel Danforth, Esq.

London, July 25, 1773.

DEAR SIR,

IT gave me great pleasure to receive so cheerful an epistle from a friend of half a century's standing, and to see him commencing life anew in so valuable a son. I hope the young gentleman's patent will be as beneficial to him, as his invention must be to the public.

I see by the papers, that you continue to afford that public your services, which makes me almost ashamed of my resolutions for retirement. But this exile, though an honourable one,[o] is become grievous to me, in so long a separation from my family, friends, and country; all which you happily enjoy; and long may you continue to enjoy them. I hope for the great pleasure of once more seeing and conversing with you; and though living on in one's children, as we both may do, is a good thing; I cannot but fancy it might be better to continue living ourselves at the same time. I rejoice therefore, in your kind intentions of including me in the benefits of that inestimable stone, which curing all diseases (even old age itself), will enable us to see the future glorious state of our America, enjoying in full security her own liberties, and offering in her bosom, a participation of them to all the oppressed of other nations. I anticipate the jolly conversation we and twenty more of our friends may have a hundred years hence on this subject, over that well replenished bowl at Cambridge commencement. I am, dear sir, for an age to come,

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[o] Dr. Franklin was at that time agent for several of the American colonies, in Great Britain.

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and for ever, with sincere esteem and respect, your most obedient, humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To His Most Serene Highness Don Gabriel, of Bourbon,

On receiving his Version of Sallust.

Philadelphia, December 12, 1775.

ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE,

I HAVE just received, through the hands of the ambassador of Spain, the much esteemed present your most Serene Highness hath so kindly sent me, of your excellent version of Sallust.

I am extremely sensible of the honour done me, and beg you would accept my thankful acknowledgments. I wish I could send hence any American literary production worthy of your perusal; but as yet the muses have scarcely visited these remote regions. Perhaps, however, the proceedings of our American Congress, just published, may be a subject of some curiosity at your court. I therefore take the liberty of sending your Highness a copy, with some other papers which contain accounts of the successes wherewith Providence has lately favoured us. Therein your wise politicians may contemplate the first efforts of a rising state, which seems likely soon to act a part of some importance on the stage of human affairs, and furnish materials for a future Sallust. I am very old and can scarce hope to see the event of this great contest: but looking forward, I think I see a powerful dominion growing up here, whose interest it will be, to form a close and firm alliance with Spain, (their territories bordering) and who being united, will be able, not only to preserve their own people in peace, but to repel the force of all the other powers in Europe. It seems, therefore, prudent on both sides to cultivate a good understanding, that may hereafter be so useful to both; towards which a fair foundation is already laid in our minds, by the well-founded popular opinion entertained here of Spanish integrity and honour. I hope my pre-

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sumption in hinting this will be pardoned. If in any thing on this side the globe I can render either service or pleasure to your Royal Highness, your commands will make me happy. With the utmost esteem and veneration, I have the honour to be your Serene Highness's,

Most obedient,

And most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Priestley.

Paris, Jan. 27, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your very kind letter of February last, some time in September. Major Carleton, who was so kind as to forward it to me, had not an opportunity of doing it sooner. I rejoice to hear of your continual progress in those useful discoveries; I find you have set all the philosophers of Europe at work upon *fixed air;* and it is with great pleasure I observe how high you stand in their opinion; for I enjoy my friends' fame as my own.

The hint you gave me jocularly, that you did not quite despair of the *philosopher's stone,* draws from me a request, that when you have found it you will take care to lose it again; for I believe in my conscience that mankind are wicked enough to continue slaughtering one another, as long as they can find money to pay the butchers. But of all the wars in my time, this on the part of England appears to me the wickedest; having no cause but malice against liberty, and the jealousy of commerce. And I think the crime seems likely to meet with its proper punishment; a total loss of her own liberty, and the destruction of her own commerce.

I suppose you would like to know something of the state of affairs in America. In all probability we shall be much stronger the next campaign than we were in the last; better armed, better disciplined, and with more ammunition. When I was at the camp before Boston, the army had not five

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rounds of powder a man; this was kept a secret even from our people. The world wondered that we so seldom fired a cannon: we could not afford it; but we now make powder in plenty.

To me it seems, as it has always done, that this war must end in our favour, and in the ruin of Britain, if she does not speedily put an end to it. An English gentleman here the other day, in company with some French, remarked, that it was folly in France not to make war immediately. *And in England,* replied one of them, *not to make peace.*

Do not believe the reports you hear of our internal divisions. We are, I believe, as much united as any people ever were, and as firmly.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Thompson, at Lisle.

Paris, February 8, 1777.

YOU are too early, *hussy,* as well as too saucy, in calling me *rebel;* you should wait for the event, which will determine whether it is a *rebellion* or only a *revolution.* Here the ladies are more civil; they call us *les insurgens,* a character that usually pleases them: and methinks all other women who smart, or have smarted under the tyranny of a bad husband, ought to be fixed in *revolution* principles, and act accordingly.

In my way to Canada last spring, I saw dear Mrs. Barrow, at New York. Mr. Barrow had been from her two or three months to keep governor Tryon, and other tories, company on board the Asia, one of the king's ships which lay in the harbour; and in all that time that naughty man had not ventured once on shore to see her. Our troops were then pouring into the town, and she was packing up to leave it; fearing as she had a large house they would incommode her by quartering officers in it. As she appeared in great perplexity, scarce knowing where to go, I persuaded her to stay; and I went to the general officers then commanding there

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and recommended her to their protection; which they promised and performed. On my return from Canada, where I was a piece of a governor (and I think a very good one) for a fortnight, and might have been so 'till this time if your wicked army, enemies to all good government, had not come and driven me out, I found her still in quiet possession of her house. I inquired how our people had behaved to her; she spoke in high terms of the respectful attention they had paid her, and the quiet and security they had procured her. I said I was glad of it; and that if they had used her ill, I would have turned tory. Then, said she, (with that pleasing gaiety so natural to her) *I wish they had.* For you must know she is a *toryess* as well as you, and can as flippantly call *rebel.* I drank tea with her; we talked affectionately of you and our other friends the Wilkes's, of whom she had received no late intelligence; what became of her since, I have not heard. The street she lived in was some months after chiefly burnt down; but as the town was then, and ever since has been, in possession of the king's troops, I have had no opportunity of knowing whether she suffered any loss in the conflagration. I hope she did not, as if she did, I should wish I had not persuaded her to stay there. I am glad to learn from you that that unhappy, though deserving family, the W.'s are getting into some business that may afford them subsistence. I pray that God will bless them, and that they may see happier days. Mr. Cheap's and Dr. H.'s good fortunes please me. Pray learn, if you have not already learnt, like me, to be pleased with other people's pleasures, and happy with their happinesses when none occur of your own; then perhaps you will not so soon be weary of the place you chance to be in, and so fond of rambling to get rid of your *ennui.* I fancy you have hit upon the right reason of your being weary of St. Omer's, viz. that you are out of temper, which is the effect of full living and idleness. A month in Bridewell, beating hemp, upon bread and water, would give you health and spirits, and subsequent cheerfulness and contentment, with every other situation. I prescribe that regi-

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men for you, my dear, in pure good will, without a fee. And let me tell you, if you do not get into temper, neither Brussels nor Lisle will suit you. I know nothing of the price of living in either of those places; but I am sure a single woman as you are, might with economy upon two hundred pounds a year, maintain herself comfortable any where; and me into the bargain. Do not invite me in earnest, however, to come and live with you; for being posted here, I ought not to comply, and I am not sure I should be able to refuse. Present my respects to Mrs. Payne, and Mrs. Heathcoat, for though I have not the honour of knowing them, yet as you say they are friends to the American cause, I am sure they must be women of good understanding. I know you wish you could see me, but as you can't, I will describe myself to you. Figure me in your mind as jolly as formerly, and as strong and hearty, only a few years older; very plainly dressed, wearing my thin grey straight hair, that peeps out under my only *coiffure*, a fine fur cap; which comes down my forehead almost to my spectacles. Think how this must appear among the powdered heads of Paris! I wish every lady and gentleman in France would only be so obliging as to follow my fashion, comb their own heads as I do mine, dismiss their *friseurs*, and pay me half the money they paid to them. You see the gentry might well afford this, and I could then enlist these *friseurs*, (who are at least 100,000) and with the money I would maintain them, make a visit with them to England, and dress the heads of your ministers and privy counsellors; which I conceive at present to be *un peu dérangées*. Adieu! madcap; and believe me ever, your affectionate friend, and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. Don't be proud of this long letter. A fit of the gout which has confined me five days, and made me refuse to see company, has given me little time to trifle; otherwise it would have been very short, visiters and business would have interrupted: and perhaps, with Mrs. Barrow, you wish they had.

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To Dr. Cooper, Boston.

Paris, May 1, 1777.

I THANK you for your kind congratulations on my safe arrival here, and for your good wishes. I am, as you supposed, treated with great civility and respect by all orders of people; but it gives me still greater satisfaction to find that our being here is of some use to our country. On that head I cannot be more explicit at present.

I rejoice with you in the happy change of affairs in America last winter; I hope the same train of success will continue through the summer. Our enemies are disappointed in the number of additional troops they purposed to send over. What they have been able to muster will not probably recruit their army to the state it was in the beginning of last campaign; and ours I hope will be equally numerous, better armed, and better clothed, than they have been heretofore.

All Europe is on our side of the question, as far as applause and good wishes can carry them. Those who live under arbitrary power do nevertheless approve of liberty, and wish for it: they almost despair of recovering it in Europe; they read the translations of our separate colony constitutions with rapture; and there are such numbers every where who talk of removing to America, with their families and fortunes as soon as peace and our independence shall be established, that it is generally believed we shall have a prodigious addition of strength, wealth, and arts, from the emigrations of Europe; and it is thought that to lessen or prevent such emigrations, the tyrannies established there must relax, and allow more liberty to their people. Hence it is a common observation here that our cause is *the cause of all mankind;* and that we are fighting for their liberty in defending our own. It is a glorious task assigned us by providence; which has, I trust, given us spirit and virtue equal to it, and will at last crown it with success.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Mr. Winthrop, Boston.

Paris, May 1, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of February 28, which gave me great pleasure.

I forwarded your letter to Dr. Price who was well lately, but his friends, on his account, were under some apprehensions from the violence of government, in consequence of his late excellent publications in favour of liberty. I wish all the friends of liberty and man would quit that sink of corruption, and leave it to its fate.

The people of this country are almost unanimously in our favour. The government has its reasons for postponing a war, but is making daily the most diligent preparations; wherein Spain goes hand in hand. In the mean time, America has the whole harvest of prizes made upon the British commerce; a kind of monopoly that has its advantages, as by affording greater encouragement to cruisers, it increases the number of our seamen and thereby augments our naval power.

The conduct of those princes of Germany, who have sold the blood of their people, has subjected them to the contempt and odium of all Europe. The prince of Anspach, whose recruits mutinied and refused to march, was obliged to disarm, and fetter them, and drive them to the sea-side by the help of his guards; himself attending in person. In his return he was publicly hooted by mobs through every town he passed in Holland, with all sorts of reproachful epithets. The king of Prussia's humour of obliging those princes to pay him the same toll per head for the men they drive through his dominions, as used to be paid him for their *cattle*, because they were sold as such, is generally spoken of with approbation; as containing a just reproof of those tyrants. I send you inclosed one of the many satires that have appeared on this occasion.

With my best wishes of prosperity to yourself and to my dear country, where I hope to spend my last years, and lay my bones,

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I am ever, dear sir, your affectionate friend, and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honourable Mr. Cushing, Boston.

Paris, May 1, 1777.

SIR,

I THANK you for your kind congratulations on my arrival here, and shall be happy in finding that our negociations on this side the water are of effectual service to our country.

The general news here is that all Europe is arming and preparing for war, as if it were soon expected. Many of the powers, however, have their reasons for endeavouring to postpone it, at least a few months longer.

Our enemies will not be able to send against us all the strength they intended: they can procure but few Germans; and their recruiting and impressing at home, goes on heavily. They threaten, however, and give out, that lord Howe is to bombard Boston this summer, and Burgoyne, with the troops from Canada, to destroy Providence, and lay waste Connecticut; while Howe marches against Philadelphia. They will do us undoubtedly as much mischief as they can: but the virtue and bravery of our countrymen, will, with the blessing of God, prevent part of what they intend, and nobly bear the rest. This campaign is entered upon with a mixture of rage and despair, as their whole scheme of reducing us depends upon its success; the wisest of the nation being clear that if this fails, administration will not be able to support another.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr Thomas Viny, Tenterden, Kent.

Passy, May 4, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED with great pleasure your kind letter, as I learnt by it that my hospitable friend still exists, and that his friendship for me had not abated.

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We have had a hard struggle, but the Almighty has favoured a just cause, and I join most heartily with you in your prayers that he may perfect his work, and establish freedom in the new world, as an asylum for those of the old, who deserve it. I find that many worthy and wealthy families of this continent are determined to remove thither and partake of it, as soon as peace shall make the passage safer; for which peace I also join your prayers most cordially, as I think the war a detestable one; and grieve much at the mischief and misery it occasions to many; my only consolation being that I did all in my power to prevent it.

When all the bustle is over, if my short remainder of life will permit my return thither, what a pleasure will it be to me to see my old friend and his children settled there. I hope he will find vines and figtrees there for all of them, under which we may sit and converse, enjoying peace and plenty, a good government, good laws and liberty, without which men lose half their value.

I am with much esteem, dear friend, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Wright,[p] *London.*

Passy, May 4, 1779.

DEAR MADAM,

I RECEIVED your favour of the 14th of March past, and if you should continue in your resolution of returning to

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[p] Mrs. Mehetabel Wright, was altogether a very extraordinary woman. She was the niece of the celebrated John Wesley, but was born at Philadelphia, in which city her parents settled at an early period. Mrs. Wright was greatly distinguished as a modeller in wax; which art she turned to a remarkable account in the American war, by coming to England, and exhibiting her performances. This enabled her to procure much intelligence of importance, which she communicated to Dr. Franklin and others, with whom she corresponded during the whole war. As soon as a general was appointed, or a squadron begun to be fitted out, the old lady found means of access to some family where she could gain

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America, through France, I shall certainly render you any of the little services in my power: but there are so many difficulties at present in getting passages hence, particularly safe ones for women, that methinks I should advise your stay till more settled times, and, till a more frequent intercourse is established.

As to the exercise of your art here, I am in doubt whether it would answer your expectations. Here are two or three who profess it, and make a show of their works on the Boulevards; but it is not the taste for persons of fashion to sit to these artists for their portraits: and both house-rent and living at Paris are very expensive.

I thought that friendship required I should acquaint you with these circumstances; after which you will use your discretion.

I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

[Written in the envelope of the above.]

PS. My grandson, whom you may remember when a little saucy boy at school, being my amanuensis in writing the within letter, has been diverting me with his remarks. He conceives that your figures cannot be packed up, without damage from any thing you could fill the boxes with to keep them steady. He supposes therefore, that you must put them into post-chaises, two and two, which will make a long train upon the road, and be a very expensive conveyance; but as they will eat nothing at the inns, you may the better afford it. When they come to Dover, he is sure they are so like life and nature, that the master of the packet will not receive

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information, and thus without being at all suspected, she contrived to transmit an account of the number of the troops, and the place of their destination to her political friends abroad. She at one time had frequent access to Buckingham house; and used, it was said, to speak her sentiments very freely to their majesties, who were amused with her originality. The great lord Chatham honoured her with his visits, and she took his likeness which appears in Westminster Abbey. Mrs. Wright died very old in February, 1786.

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them on board without passes; which you will do well therefore to take out from the secretary's office, before you leave London; where they will cost you *only* the modest price of two guineas and sixpence each, which you will pay without grumbling, because you are sure the money will never be employed against your country. It will require, he says, five or six of the long wicker French stage coaches to carry them as passengers from Calais to Paris, and a ship with good accommodations to convey them to America; where all the world will wonder at your clemency to Lord N———; that having it in your power to hang, or send him to the lighters, you had generously reprieved him for transportation.

To Mr. Bridgen, London.

Passy, October 2, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your favour of the 17th past, and the two samples of copper are since come to hand. The metal seems to be very good, and the price reasonable, but I have not yet received the orders necessary to justify my making the purchase proposed. There has indeed been an intention to strike copper coin, that may not only be useful as small change, but serve other purposes. Instead of repeating continually upon every halfpenny the dull story that every body knows, (and what would have been no loss to mankind if nobody had ever known,) that George III. is King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, &c. &c. To put on one side some important Proverb of Solomon, some pious moral, prudential, or economical precept, the frequent inculcation of which, by seeing it every time one receives a piece of money, might make an impression upon the mind, especially of young persons, and tend to regulate their conduct; such as on some, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;* on others, *Honesty is the best policy;* on others, *He that by the plow would thrive, himself must either hold or drive;* on others, *Keep thy shop, and thy shop will*

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keep thee; on others, *a penny saved is a penny got;* on others, *He that buys what he has no need of, will soon be forced to sell his necessaries;* on others, *Early to bed, and early to rise, will make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise;* and so on to a great variety. The other side it was proposed to fill with good designs, drawn and engraved by the best artists in France, of all the different species of barbarity with which the English have carried on the war in America, expressing every abominable circumstance of their cruelty and inhumanity, that figures can express, to make an impression on the minds of posterity as strong and durable as that on the copper. This resolution has been a long time forborne, but the late burning of defenceless towns in Connecticut, on the flimsy pretence that the people fired from behind their houses, when it is known to have been premeditated and ordered from England, will probably give the finishing provocation, and may occasion a vast demand for your metal.

I thank you for your kind wishes respecting my health, I return them most cordially fourfold into your own bosom. Adieu.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. B. Vaughan.

Passy, Nov. 9, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received several kind letters from you, which I have not regularly answered. They gave me however great pleasure, as they acquainted me with your welfare, and that of your family, and other friends: and I hope you will continue writing to me as often as you can do it conveniently.

I thank you much for the great care and pains you have taken in regulating and correcting the edition of those papers. Your friendship for me appears in almost every page; and if the preservation of any of them should prove of use to the public, it is to you that the public will owe the obligation. In looking them over, I have noted some faults of im-

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pression that hurt the sense, and some other little matters, which you will find all in a sheet under the title of *errata*. You can best judge whether it may be worth while to add any of them to the *errata* already printed, or whether it may not be as well to reserve the whole for correction in another edition, if such should ever be. Inclosed I send a more perfect copy of the chapter.[q]

If I should ever recover the pieces that were in the hands of my son, and those I left among my papers in America, I think there may be enough to make three more such volumes, of which a great part would be more interesting.

As to the *time* of publishing, of which you ask my opinion, I am not furnished with any reasons, or ideas of reasons on which to form any opinion. Naturally I should suppose the bookseller should be from experience the best judge, and I should be for leaving it to him.

I did not write the pamphlet you mention. I know nothing of it. I suppose it is the same, concerning which, Dr. Priestley formerly asked me the same question. That for which he took it, was entitled, *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*, with these lines in the title-page.

——— "Whatever is, is right. But purblind man,
Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest link:
His eye not carrying to that equal beam
That poises all above" ——— Dryden.

London: printed MDCCXXV.[r]

I return the manuscripts you were so obliging as to send me; I am concerned at your having no other copies, I hope these will get safe to your hands; I do not remember the Duke de Chartres showing me the letter you mention. I have received Dr. Crawfurd's book, but not your abstract, which I wait for as you desire.

I send you also Mr. Dupont's *Table Economique*, which I

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[q] A parable against persecution.—See *Papers on Miscellaneous Subjects*.

[r] See a full account of this Pamphlet in *Memoirs of the Life, Vol.* 1.

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think an excellent thing, as it contains in a clear method all the principles of that new sect, called here *les Economistes*.

Poor Henley's dying in that manner is inconceivable to me. Is any reason given to account for it, besides insanity?

Remember me affectionately to all the good family, and believe me with great esteem, my dear friend, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Père Beccaria.[a]

Passy, November 19, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING some time since heard of your illness with great concern, it gave me infinite pleasure to learn this day from M. Chantel, (who did me the honor of a visit) that you were so far recovered as to be able to make little excursions on horseback; I pray God that your convalescence may be quick and perfect, and your health be again firmly established: *science* would lose too much in losing one so zealous and active in its cause, and so capable of accelerating its progress and augmenting its dominions.

I find myself here immersed in affairs which absorb my attention, and prevent my pursuing those studies in which I always found the highest satisfaction: and I am now grown so old as hardly to hope for a return of that leisure and tranquillity so necessary for philosophical disquisitions. I have however, not long since, thrown a few thoughts on paper re-

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[a] GIOVANNI BATTISTE BECCARIA, a religious of the school of Piety, was a native of Mondovi. His celebrity as a teacher of mathematics and philosophy, first at Palermo, and afterwards at Rome, caused him to be invited to Turin, where he filled the chair of experimental lecturer, and was employed in the tuition of some branches of the royal family. His correspondence was sought by men of letters in various countries; and he imparted to Dr. Franklin in particular, many important facts on philosophical subjects. Father Beccaria, died at Turin, in an advanced age, in 1781. His "Dissertations on Electricity," have been published; but the most curious of his pieces is an "Essay on the cause of Storms and Tempests."

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lative to the Aurora Borealis,[t] which I would send you, but that I suppose you may have seen them in the Journal of l'Abbé Rozier. If not I will make out a copy and send it to you; perhaps with some corrections.

Every thing of your writing is always very welcome to me; if, therefore, you have lately published any new experiments or observations in physics, I shall be happy to see them, when you have an opportunity of sending them to me.

With the highest esteem, respect, and affection, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Price, London.

Passy, February 6, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED but very lately your kind favour of October 14th. Dr. Ingenhousz, who brought it, having staid long in Holland. I sent the inclosed directly to Mr. L. It gave me great pleasure to understand that you continue well. Your writings, after all the abuse you and they have met with, begin to make serious impressions on those who at first rejected the counsels you gave; and they will acquire new weight every day, and be in high esteem when the cavils against them are dead and forgotten. Please to present my affectionate respects to that honest, sensible, and intelligent society,[u] who did me so long the honour of admitting me to share in their instructive conversations. I never think of the hours I so happily spent in that company, without regretting that they are never to be repeated; for I see no prospect of an end to this unhappy war in my time. Dr. Priestley, you tell me, continues his experiments with success. We make daily great improvements in *natural*—there is one I wish to see in *moral* philosophy; the discovery of a plan that would induce and oblige nations to settle their disputes without first cut-

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[t] See "*papers on Philosophical Subjects.*" Vol. III. p. 289.

[u] Supposed to allude to a club at the London Coffee-house.

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ting one another's throats. When will human reason be sufficiently improved to see the advantage of this? When will men be convinced that even successful wars, at length become misfortunes to those who unjustly commenced them, and who triumphed blindly in their success, not seeing all its consequences. Your great comfort and mine in this war is, that we honestly and faithfully did every thing in our power to prevent it. Adieu and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Priestley.

Passy, February 8, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR kind letter of September 27th, came to hand but very lately, the bearer having staid long in Holland.

I always rejoice to hear of your being still employed in experimental researches into nature, and of the success you meet with. The rapid progress *true* science now makes, occasions my regretting sometimes that I was born so soon: it is impossible to imagine the height to which may be carried, in a thousand years, the power of man over matter; we may perhaps learn to deprive large masses of their gravity, and give them absolute levity for the sake of easy transport. Agriculture may diminish its labour and double its produce: all diseases may by sure means be prevented or cured, (not excepting even that of old age) and our lives lengthened at pleasure even beyond the antediluvian standard. O! that moral science were in as fair a way of improvement; that men would cease to be wolves to one another; and that human beings would at length learn what they now improperly call humanity!

I am glad that my little paper on the Aurora Borealis pleased. If it should occasion farther inquiry, and so produce a better hypothesis, it will not be wholly useless.

I am ever, with the greatest and most sincere esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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[Inclosed in the foregoing letter; being an answer to a separate paper received from Dr. Priestley.]

I have considered the situation of that person very attentively; I think that with a little help from the *Moral Algebra*, he might form a better judgment than any other person can form for him. But since my opinion seems to be desired, I give it for continuing to the end of the term, under all the present disagreeable circumstances: the connection will then die a natural death. No reason will be expected to be given for the separation, and of course no offence taken at reasons given; the friendship may still subsist, and in some other way be useful. The time diminishes daily, and is usefully employed. All human situations have their inconveniencies; we *feel* those that we find in the present, and we neither *feel* nor *see* those that exist in another. Hence we make frequent and troublesome changes without amendment, and often for the worse. In my youth I was passenger in a little sloop, descending the river Delaware. There being no wind, we were obliged, when the ebb was spent, to cast anchor, and wait for the next. The heat of the sun on the vessel was excessive, the company strangers to me, and not very agreeable. Near the river side I saw what I took to be a pleasant green meadow, in the middle of which was a large shady tree, where it struck my fancy I could sit and read, (having a book in my pocket) and pass the time agreeably till the tide turned; I therefore prevailed with the captain to put me ashore. Being landed, I found the greatest part of my meadow was really a marsh, in crossing which, to come at my tree, I was up to my knees in mire: and I had not placed myself under its shade five minutes before the muskitoes in swarms found me out, attacked my legs, hands, and face, and made my reading and my rest impossible; so that I returned to the beach, and called for the boat to come and take me on board again, where I was obliged to bear the heat I had strove to quit,

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and also the laugh of the company. Similar cases in the affairs of life, have since frequently fallen under my observation.

I have had thoughts of a college for him in America; I know no one who might be more useful to the public in the institution of youth. But there are possible unpleasantnesses in that situation: it cannot be obtained but by a too hazardous voyage at this time for a family: and the time for experiments would be all otherwise engaged.

B. FRANKLIN.

To General Washington.

Passy, March 5, 1780.

SIR,

I RECEIVED but lately the letter your excellency did me the honour of writing to me in recommendation of the Marquis de la Fayette. His modesty detained it long in his own hands. We became acquainted however, from the time of his arrival at Paris; and his zeal for the honour of our country, his activity in our affairs here, and his firm attachment to our cause, and to you, impressed me with the same regard and esteem for him that your excellency's letter would have done had it been immediately delivered to me.

Should peace arrive after another campaign or two, and afford us a little leisure, I should be happy to see your excellency in Europe, and to accompany you, if my age and strength would permit, in visiting some of its most ancient and famous kingdoms. You would on this side the sea, enjoy the great reputation you have acquired, pure and free from those little shades that the jealousy and envy of a man's countrymen and cotemporaries are ever endeavouring to cast over living merit. Here you would know, and enjoy, what posterity will say of Washington. For a thousand leagues have nearly the same effect with a thousand years. The feeble voice of those grovelling passions cannot extend so far either in time or distance. At present I enjoy that pleasure for you, as I frequent-

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ly hear the old generals of this martial country (who study the maps of America, and mark upon them all your operations) speak with sincere approbation and great applause of your conduct, and join in giving you the character of one of the greatest captains of the age.

I must soon quit the scene, but you may live to see our country flourish, as it will amazingly and rapidly after the war is over. Like a field of young Indian corn, which long fair weather and sunshine had enfeebled and discoloured, and which in that weak state, by a thunder gust of violent wind, hail, and rain seemed to be threatened with absolute destruction; yet the storm being past, it recovers fresh verdure, shoots up with double vigor, and delights the eye not of its owner only, but of every observing traveller.

The best wishes that can be formed for your health, honor and happiness, ever attend you, from

Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Miss Georgiana Shipley.[v]

Passy, October 8, 1780.

IT is long, very long, my dear friend, since I had the great pleasure of hearing from you, and receiving any of your very pleasing letters. But it is my fault. I have long omitted my part of the correspondence. Those who love to receive letters should write letters. I wish I could safely promise an amendment of that fault. But besides the indolence attending age, and growing upon us with it, my time is engrossed by too much business, and I have too many inducements to postpone doing, what I feel I ought to do for my own sake, and what I can never resolve to omit entirely.

Your translations from Horace as far as I can judge of poetry and translations are very good. That of the *Quo quo*

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[v] Daughter of Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.

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ruitis is so suitable to the times, that the conclusion (in your version) seems to threaten like a prophecy; and methinks there is at least some appearance of danger that it may be fulfilled.—I am unhappily an enemy, yet I think there has been enough of blood spilt, and I wish what is left in the veins of that once loved people, may be spared; by a peace solid and everlasting.

It is a great while since I have heard any thing of the *good Bishop*. Strange that so simple a character should sufficiently distinguish one of that sacred body! *Donnez moi de ses Nouvelles.*—I have been sometime flattered with the expectation of seeing the countenance of that most honoured and ever beloved friend, delineated by your pencil. The portrait is said to have been long on the way, but is not yet arrived: nor can I hear where it is.

Indolent as I have confessed myself to be, I could not, you see, miss this good and safe opportunity of sending you a few lines, with my best wishes for your happiness, and that of the whole dear and amiable family in whose sweet society I have spent so many happy hours. Mr. Jones[w] tells me he shall have a pleasure in being the bearer of my letter, of which I make no doubt; I learn from him that to your drawing, and music, and painting, and poetry, and latin, you have added a proficiency in chess; so that you are, as the French say, *remplie de talens.* May they and you fall to the lot of one that shall duly value them, and love you as much as I do.

Adieu.

B. FRANKLIN.

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[w] Afterwards Sir William Jones, who married into the Bishop of St. Asaph's family.

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To Dr. Price.

Passy, October 9, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

BESIDES the pleasure of their company, I had the great satisfaction of hearing by your two valuable friends, and learning from your letter that you enjoy a good state of health. May God continue it, as well for the good of mankind, as for your comfort. I thank you much for the second edition of your excellent pamphlet: I forwarded that you sent to Mr. Dana, he being in Holland. I wish also to see the piece you have written, (as Mr. Jones tells me) on toleration: I do not expect that your new parliament will be either wiser or honester than the last. All projects to procure an honest one, by place bills, &c. appear to me vain and impracticable. The true cure I imagine is to be found only in rendering all places unprofitable, and the king too poor to give bribes and pensions. 'Till this is done, which can only be by a revolution, and I think you have not virtue enough left to procure one, your nation will always be plundered; and obliged to pay by taxes the plunderers for plundering and ruining. Liberty and virtue therefore join in the call, COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE! I am fully of your opinion respecting religious tests; but though the people of Massachusetts have not in their new constitution kept quite clear of them; yet if we consider what that people were one hundred years ago, we must allow they have gone greater lengths in liberality of sentiment, on religious subjects: and we may hope for greater degrees of perfection when their constitution some years hence shall be revised. If christian preachers had continued to teach as Christ and his apostles did, without salaries, and as the Quakers now do, I imagine tests would never have existed: for I think they were invented not so much to secure religion itself as the emoluments of it. When a religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and when it cannot support itself, and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are obliged to call for the help

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of the civil power, 'tis a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one. But I shall be out of my depth if I wade any deeper in theology, and I will not trouble you with politics, nor with news which are almost as uncertain: but conclude with a heartfelt wish to embrace you once more and enjoy your sweet society in peace, among our honest, worthy, ingenious friends at the *London*.

Adieu, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To M. Court de Gebelin,[x] *Paris.*

Passy, May 7, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I AM glad the little book[y] proved acceptable. It does not appear to me intended for a grammar to teach the language: It is rather what we call in English a *spelling-book*, in which the only method observed is to arrange the words according to their number of syllables, placing those of one syllable together, then those of two syllables, and so on. And it is to be observed, that *Sa ki ma*, for instance, is not three words, but one word of three syllables; and the reason that *hyphens*

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[x] ANTOINE COURT DE GEBELIN, born at Nismes, in 1725, of a Protestant family, became a minister in that communion, first in the Cevennes, and next at Lausanne; which however he quitted, together with the clerical function, for the profession of literature at Paris, where he acquired so great a reputation as an antiquary and philologer, that he was appointed to superintend one of the museums. He lost much of his reputation, however, by his enthusiastic zeal in favour of animal magnetism. He died at Paris, May 13, 1784. His great work is entitled, "Monde Primitif, analysé et comparé avec le Monde Moderne," 9 tom. 4to. The excellence of his character may be appreciated from the single fact, that on quitting Switzerland, he voluntarily gave to his sister the principal part of his patrimony, reserving little for himself, and depending for a maintenance upon the exercise of his talents.

[y] A Vocabulary of the Language of one of the Indian tribes in North America.

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are not placed between the syllables is, that the printer had not enough of them.

As the Indians had no letters, they had no orthography. The Delaware language being differently spelt from the Virginian, may not always arise from a difference in the languages; for strangers who learn the language of an Indian nation, finding no orthography, are at liberty in writing the language to use such compositions of letters as they think will best produce the sounds of the words. I have observed that our Europeans of different nations, who learn the same Indian language, form each his own orthography according to the usual sounds given to the letters in his own language. Thus the same words of the Mohock language written by an English, a French, and a German interpreter often differ very much in the spelling; and without knowing the usual powers of the letters in the language of the interpreter, one cannot come at the pronunciation of the Indian words. The spelling-book in question was, I think, written by a German.

You mention a Virginian Bible. Is it not the Bible of the Massachusetts language, translated by Elliot, and printed in New England about the middle of the last century? I know this Bible, but have never heard of one in the Virginian language. Your observations of the similitude between many of the words, and those of the ancient world, are indeed very curious.

The inscription which you find to be Phenician, is, I think near *Taunton*, (not Jannston, as you write it.) There is some account of it in the old Philosophical Transactions; I have never been at the place, but shall be glad to see your remarks on it.

The compass appears to have been long known in China, before it was known in Europe; unless we suppose it known to Homer, who makes the prince, that lent ships to Ulysses, boast that they had *a spirit* in them, by whose directions they could find their way in a cloudy day, or the darkest night. If any Phenicians arrived in America, I should rather

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think it was not by the accident of a storm, but in the course of their long and adventurous voyage; and that they coasted from Denmark and Norway over to Greenland, and down southward by Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, &c. to New England; as the Danes themselves certainly did some ages before Columbus.

Our new American society will be happy in the correspondence you mention, and when it is possible for me, I shall be glad to attend the meetings of your society, which I am sure must be very instructive.

With great and sincere esteem, I have the honour to be,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Edmund Burke, Esq., M. P.

Passy, October 15, 1781.

SIR,

I RECEIVED but a few days since your very friendly letter of August last, on the subject of General Burgoyne.

Since the foolish part of mankind will make wars from time to time with each other, not having sense enough otherwise to settle their differences, it certainly becomes the wiser part, who cannot prevent those wars, to alleviate as much as possible the calamities attending them. Mr. Burke always stood high in my esteem; but his affectionate concern for his friend renders him still more amiable, and makes the honour he does me of admitting me of the number still more precious.

I do not think the congress have any wish to persecute general Burgoyne. I never heard till I received your letter that they had recalled him; if they have made such a resolution, it must be, I suppose, a conditional one, to take place in case their offer of exchanging him for Mr. Laurens should not be accepted; a resolution intended merely to enforce that offer.

I have just received an authentic copy of the resolve containing that offer; and authorising me to make it. As I have

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no communication with your ministers, I send it inclosed to you.[z] If you can find any means of negociating this business, I am sure the restoring another worthy man to his family and friends, will be an addition to your pleasure. With great and invariable respect and affection, I am, Sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To his Excellency General Washington.

SIR, *Passy, April 2, 1782.*

I RECEIVED duly the honour of your letter, accompanying the capitulation of general Cornwallis. All the world agree, that no expedition was ever better planned or better executed; it has made a great addition to the military reputation you had already acquired, and brightens the glory that surrounds your name, and that must accompany it to our latest posterity. No news could possibly make me more happy. The infant Hercules has now strangled the two serpents that attacked him in his cradle, and I trust his future history will be answerable.[a]

This will be presented to you by the count de Segur. He is son of the Marquis de Segur, minister of war, and our very good friend: but I need not claim your regards to the young gentleman on that score; his amiable personal qualities, his very sensible conversation, and his zeal for the cause of liberty, will obtain and secure your esteem, and be better recommendation than any I can give him.

The English seem not to know either how to continue the war, or to make peace with us. Instead of entering into a regular treaty, for putting an end to a contest they are tired of, they have voted in parliament, that the recovery of America by force is impracticable, that an offensive war against us ought not to be continued, and that whoever advises it shall be deemed an enemy to his country.

[z] Wanting.

[a] A medal was struck embodying this idea, which forms the vignette of Vol. V. of this edition.

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Thus the garrisons of New York, and Charlestown, if continued there, must sit still, being only allowed to defend themselves. The ministry not understanding or approving this making of peace by halves, have quitted their places, but we have no certain account here who is to succeed them, so that the measures likely to be taken are yet uncertain; probably we shall know something of them before the Marquis de la Fayette takes his departure. There are grounds for good hopes however; but I think we should not therefore relax in our preparations for a vigorous campaign, as that nation is subject to sudden fluctuations: and though somewhat humiliated at present, a little success in the West Indies may dissipate their present fears, recall their natural insolence, and occasion the interruption of negociation, and a continuance of the war. We have great stores purchased here for the use of your army, which will be sent as soon as transports can be procured for them to go under good convoy.

My best wishes always have, and always will attend you, being with the greatest and most sincere esteem and respect, sir, your excellency's most obedient, and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Rev. Dr. Priestley.

Passy, June 7, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 7th of April, also one of the third of May. I have always great pleasure in hearing from you, in learning that you are well, and that you continue your experiments. I should rejoice much if I could once more recover the leisure to search with you into the works of nature; I mean the inanimate or moral part of them: the more I discovered of the former, the more I admired them; the more I know of the latter, the more I am disgusted with them. Men, I find to be a sort of beings very badly constructed, as they are generally more easily provoked than reconciled, more disposed to do mischief to each other than to

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make reparation, much more easily deceived than undeceived, and having more pride and even pleasure in killing than in begetting one another; for without a blush they assemble in great armies at noon-day to destroy, and when they have killed as many as they can, they exaggerate the number to augment the fancied glory; but they creep into corners, or cover themselves with the darkness of night when they mean to beget, as being ashamed of a virtuous action. A virtuous action it would be, and a vicious one the killing of them, if the species were really worth producing or preserving; but of this I begin to doubt. I know you have no such doubts, because in your zeal for their welfare, you are taking a great deal of pains to save their souls. Perhaps as you grow older, you may look upon this as a hopeless project, or an idle amusement, repent of having murdered in mephetic air so many honest, harmless mice, and wish that to prevent mischief you had used boys and girls instead of them. In what light we are viewed by superior beings, may be gathered from a piece of late West-India news, which possibly has not yet reached you. A young angel of distinction being sent down to this world on some business, for the first time, had an old courier-spirit assigned him as a guide; they arrived over the seas of Martinico, in the middle of the long day of obstinate fight between the fleets of Rodney, and De Grasse. When through the clouds of smoke, he saw the fire of the guns, the decks covered with mangled limbs, and bodies dead or dying, the ships sinking, burning, or blown into the air, and the quantity of pain, misery, and destruction, the crews yet alive were thus with so much eagerness dealing round to one another; he turned angrily to his guide, and said, you blundering block-head, you are ignorant of your business; you undertook to conduct me to the earth, and you have brought me into hell! No, sir, says the guide, I have made no mistake; this is really the earth, and these are men. Devils never treat one another in this cruel manner; they have more sense, and more of what men (vainly) call humanity.

But to be serious my dear old friend, I love you as much

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as ever, and I love all the honest souls that meet at the London Coffee-house. I only wonder how it happened that they and my other friends in England came to be such good creatures in the midst of so perverse a generation. I long to see them and you once more, and I labour for peace with more earnestness, that I may again be happy in your sweet society.

I showed your letter to the Duke de la Rochefoucault, who thinks with me that the new experiments you have made are extremely curious, and he has given me thereupon a note which I inclose, and I request you would furnish me with the answer desired.

Yesterday the *Count du Nord*[b] was at the Academy of Sciences, when sundry experiments were exhibited for his entertainment; among them, one by M. Lavoisier, to show that the strongest fire we yet know is made in charcoal blown upon with dephlogisticated air. In a heat so produced, he melted platina presently, the fire being much more powerful than that of the strongest burning mirror. Adieu, and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.[c]

Passy, June 10, 1782.

I RECEIVED and read the letter from my dear and much respected friend, with infinite pleasure. After so long a silence, and the long continuance of its unfortunate causes, a line from you was a prognostic of happier times approaching, when we may converse and communicate freely, without

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[b] The Grand Duke of Russia, afterwards the Emperor Paul I.

[c] JONATHAN SHIPLEY took his degrees at Christ Church, and in 1743, was made Prebendary of Winchester. After travelling in 1745, with the Duke of Cumberland, he was promoted in 1749 to a Canonry at Christ Church, became Dean of Winchester in 1760, and in 1769, Bishop of St. Asaph. He was author of some elegant verses on the death of Queen Caroline, and published besides, some poems and sermons, and died 1788. He was an ardent friend of American Independence.

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danger from the malevolence of men enraged by the ill success of their distracted projects.

I long with you for the return of peace, on the general principles of humanity. The hope of being able to pass a few more of my last days happily in the sweet conversations and company I once enjoyed at Twyford,[d] is a particular motive that adds strength to the general wish, and quickens my industry to procure that best of blessings. After much occasion to consider the folly and mischiefs of a state of warfare, and the little or no advantage obtained even by those nations who have conducted it with the most success; I have been apt to think that there has never been, nor ever will be any such thing as a *good* war, or a *bad* peace.

You ask, if I still relish my old studies? I relish them, but I cannot pursue them. My time is engrossed unhappily with other concerns. I requested of the congress last year, my discharge from this public station, that I might enjoy a little leisure in the evening of a long life of business: but it was refused me, and I have been obliged to drudge on a little longer.

You are happy as your years come on, in having that dear and most amiable family about you. Four daughters! how rich! I have but one, and she, necessarily detained from me at a thousand leagues distance. I feel the want of that tender care of me which might be expected from a daughter, and would give the world for one. Your shades are all placed in a row over my fire-place, so that I not only have you always in my mind, but constantly before my eyes.

The cause of liberty and America, has been greatly obliged to you. I hope you will live long to see that country flourish under its new constitution, which I am sure will give you great pleasure. Will you permit me to express another hope, that now your friends are in power, they will take the first

[d] The country residence of the Bishop.

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opportunity of showing the sense they ought to have of your virtues and your merit?

Please to make my best respects acceptable to Mrs. Shipley, and embrace for me tenderly all our dear children. With the utmost esteem, respect, and veneration, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Inghenhausz.[e]

Passy, June 21, 1782.

I AM sorry that any misunderstanding should arise between you and Dr. ———. The indiscretions of friends on both sides, often occasion such misunderstandings. When they produce public altercations, the ignorant are diverted at the expense of the learned. I hope, therefore, that you will omit the polemic piece in your French edition, and take no public notice of the improper behaviour of your friend; but go on with your excellent experiments, produce facts, improve science, and do good to mankind. Reputation will follow, and the little injustices of cotemporary laborers will be forgotten; my example may encourage you, or else I should not mention it. You know that when my papers were first published, the Abbé Nollet, then high in reputation, attacked them in a book of letters. An answer was expected from me, but I made none, to that book nor to any other. They are now all neglected, and the truth seems to be established: you can always employ your time better than in polemics.

Monsieur Lavoisier, the other day showed an experiment at the Academy of Sciences, to the *Comte du Nord*, that is said to be curious. He kindled an hollow charcoal, and blew into it a stream of dephlogisticated air. In this focus, which is said to be the hottest fire human art has yet been able to produce, he melted platina in a few minutes.

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[e] JOHN INGENHAUSZ, F. R. S. an eminent physician and chemist, born at Breda, 1730, died in 1799.

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Our American affairs wear a better aspect now than at any time heretofore. Our councils are perfectly united; our people all armed and disciplined. Much and frequent service as militia has indeed made them all soldiers. Our enemies are much diminished, and reduced to two or three garrisons; our commerce and agriculture flourish. England at length sees the difficulty of conquering us, and no longer demands submission, but asks for peace. She would now think herself happy to obtain a federal union with us, and will endeavour it; but perhaps will be disappointed, as it is the interest of all Europe to prevent it. I last year requested of congress to release me from this service, that I might spend the evening of life more agreeably in philosophic leisure; but I was refused. If I had succeeded, it was my intention to make the tour of Italy, with my grandson, pass into Germany, and spend some time happily with you, whom I have always loved, ever since I knew you, with uninterrupted affection. We have lost our common friend the excellent Pringle![f] How many pleasing hours you and I have passed together in his company! I must soon follow him, being now in my seventy-seventh year; but you have yet a prospect of many years of usefulness still before you, which I hope you will fully enjoy; and I am persuaded you will ever kindly remember your truly affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Miss Alexander.

Passy, June 24, 1782.

I AM not at all displeased that the thesis and dedication with which we were threatened are blown over, for I dislike much all sorts of mummery. The republic of letters has

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[f] Sir John Pringle, Bart., born in Roxburghshire, in 1707, Physician to the Queen's household, afterwards to the King, and president of the Royal Society; died in 1782. He wrote "*Observations on the Diseases of Army*," &c. &c.

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gained no reputation, whatever else it may have gained, by the commerce of dedications; I never made one and never desired that one should be made to me. When I submitted to receive this, it was from the bad habit I have long had, of doing every thing that ladies desire me to do: there is no refusing any thing to madame la Marck, nor to you.

I have been to pay my respects to that amiable lady, not merely because it was a compliment due to her, but because I love her; which induces me to excuse her not letting me in; the same reason I should have for excusing your faults if you had any. I have not seen your papa since the receipt of your pleasing letter, so could arrange nothing with him, respecting the carriage. During seven or eight days, I shall be very busy: after that you shall hear from me, and the carriage shall be at your service. How could you think of writing to me about chimneys and fires, in such weather as this! Now is the time for the frugal lady you mention to save her wood, obtain *plus de chaleur*, and lay it up against winter, as people do ice against summer. Frugality is an enriching virtue; a virtue I never could acquire in myself: but I was once lucky enough to find it in a wife, who thereby became a fortune to me. Do you possess it? If you do, and I were twenty years younger, I would give your father one thousand guineas for you. I know you would be worth more to me as a *menagère*, I am covetous and love good bargains. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Hutton.[5]

Passy, July 7, 1782.

MY OLD AND DEAR FRIEND,

A LETTER written by you to M. Bertin, ministre d' etat, containing an account of the abominable murders com-

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[5] JAMES HUTTON, son of Doctor Hutton, (who in the early part of his life had been a bookseller) was for many years secretary to the Society

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mitted by some of the frontier people on the poor Moravian Indians, has given me infinite pain and vexation. The dispensations of Providence in this world puzzle my weak reason; I cannot comprehend why cruel men should have been permitted thus to destroy their fellow-creatures. Some of the Indians may be supposed to have committed sins, but one cannot think the little children had committed any worthy of death. Why has a single man in England, who happens to love blood, and to hate Americans, been permitted to gratify that bad temper, by hiring German murderers, and joining them with his own, to destroy, in a continued course of bloody years, near 100,000 human creatures, many of them possessed of useful talents, virtues, and abilities, to which he has no pretension! It is he who has furnished the savages with hatchets and scalping knives, and engages them to fall upon our defenceless farmers, and murder them with their wives and children, paying for their scalps, of which the account kept in America, already amounts, as I have heard, to near *two thousand!* Perhaps the people of the frontiers, exasperated by the cruelties of the Indians, have been induced to kill all Indians that fall into their hands without distinction: so that even these horrid murders of our poor Moravians may be laid to his charge. And yet this man lives, enjoys all the good things this world can afford, and is surrounded by flatterers, who keep even his conscience quiet, by telling him he is the best of Princes! I wonder this, but I cannot therefore part with the comfortable belief of a divine providence; and the more I see the impossibility, from the number and extent

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of Moravians. He died April 25, 1795, in his 80th year, at Oxstead Cottage, Surrey; and was buried in the Moravian cemetry at Chelsea. He was a well known character, and very generally esteemed. He was a faithful brother of the Moravian fraternity fifty-five years; the latter part of his life was spent literally in going about doing good, and his charities were confined to no sect.

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of his crimes, of giving equivalent punishment to a wicked man in this life, the more I am convinced of a future state, in which all that here appears to be wrong shall be set right, all that is crooked made straight. In this faith let you and I, my dear friend, comfort ourselves; it is the only comfort in the present dark scene of things that is allowed us.

I shall not fail to write to the government of America, urging that effectual care may be taken to protect and save the remainder of those unhappy people.

Since writing the above, I have received a Philadelphia paper, containing some account of the same horrid transaction, a little different, and some circumstances alleged as excuses or palliations, but extremely weak and insufficient. I send it to you inclosed.

With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend yours most affectionately. B. FRANKLIN.

To Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society London.

Passy, Sept. 9, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just received the very kind, friendly letter, you were so good as to write to me by Dr. Broussonnet. Be assured that I long earnestly for a return of those peaceful times, when I could sit down in sweet society with my English philosophical friends, communicating to each other new discoveries, and proposing improvements of old ones; all tending to extend the power of man over matter, avert or diminish the evils he is subject to, or augment the number of his enjoyments. Much more happy should I be thus employed in your most desirable company, than in that of all the grandees of the earth projecting plans of mischief, however necessary they may be supposed for obtaining greater good.

I am glad to learn by the doctor that your great work goes on. I admire your magnanimity in the undertaking, and the perseverance with which you have prosecuted it.

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I join with you most perfectly in the charming wish you so well express, "that such measures may be taken by both parties as may tend to the elevation of both, rather than the destruction of either." If any thing has happened endangering one of them, my comfort is, that I endeavoured earnestly to prevent it, and gave honest, faithful advice, which, if it had been regarded, would have been effectual. And still if proper means are used to produce, not only a peace, but what is much more interesting, a thorough reconciliation; a few years may heal the wounds that have been made in our happiness, and produce a degree of prosperity of which at present we can hardly form a conception. With great and sincere esteem, and respect, I am, dear sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. F. Hopkinson, Philadelphia.

Passy, Dec. 24, 1712.

I THANK you for your ingenious paper in favour of the trees. I own I now wish we had two rows of them in every one of our streets. The comfortable shelter they would afford us when walking, from our burning summer suns, and the greater coolness of our walls and pavements, would, I conceive, in the improved health of the inhabitants, amply compensate the loss of a house now and then by fire, if such should be the consequence: but a tree is soon felled; and as axes are at hand in every neighbourhood, may be down before the engines arrive.

You do well to avoid being concerned in the pieces of personal abuse, so scandalously common in our newspapers, that I am afraid to lend any of them here, 'till I have examined and laid aside such as would disgrace us; and subject us among strangers to a reflection like that used by a gentleman in a coffee-house to two quarrellers, who after a mutually free use of the words, rogue, villain, rascal, scoundrel, &c. seemed as if they would refer their dispute to him: I know

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nothing of you, or your affairs, said he; I only perceive *that you know one another.*

The conductor of a newspaper, should, methinks, consider himself as in some degree the guardian of his country's reputation, and refuse to insert such writings as may hurt it. If people will print their abuses of one another, let them do it in little pamphlets, and distribute them where they think proper. It is absurd to trouble all the world with them; and unjust to subscribers in distant places, to stuff their paper with matters so unprofitable and so disagreeable. With sincere esteem and affection, I am, my dear friend, ever yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Right Honorable Earl of Buchan.

Passy, March 17, 1783.

MY LORD,

I RECEIVED the letter your lordship did me the honor of writing to me, and am obliged by your kind congratulations on the return of peace, which I hope will be lasting.

With regard to the terms on which lands may be acquired in America, and the manner of beginning new settlements on them, I cannot give better information than may be found in a book lately printed in London, under some such title as *Letters from a Pennsylvanian Farmer,* by Hector St. John. The only encouragements we hold out to strangers are, a good climate, fertile soil, wholesome air and water, plenty of provisions and fuel, good pay for labour, kind neighbors, good laws, liberty, and a hearty welcome: the rest depends on a man's own industry and virtue. Lands are cheap, but they must be bought. All settlements are undertaken at private expense: the public contributes nothing but defence and justice. I should not however expect much emigration from a country so much drained of men as yours[b] must have been by the late war; since the more have left it, the more room,

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[b] Scotland.

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and the more encouragement remains for those who staid at home. But this you can best judge of; and I have long observed of your people, that their sobriety, frugality, industry, and honesty, seldom fail of success in America, and of procuring them a good establishment among us.

I do not recollect the circumstance you are pleased to mention, of my having saved a citizen at St. Andrew, by giving a turn to his disorder; and I am curious to know what the disorder was, and what the advice I gave which proved so salutary.[i]

With great regard I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Hewson.[k]

Passy January 27, 1783.

THE departure of my dearest friend,[l] which I learn from your last letter greatly affects me. To meet with her once more in this life was one of the principal motives of my proposing to visit England again before my return to America. The last year carried off my friends Dr. Pringle and Dr. Fothergill, and lord Kaimes and lord Le Despencer; this has begun to take away the rest, and strikes the hardest. Thus the ties I had to that country, and indeed to the world in general, are loosened one by one; and I shall soon have no attachment left to make me unwilling to follow.

I intended writing when I sent the eleven books, but lost

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[i] It was a fever in which the earl of Buchan, then lord Cadross, lay sick at St. Andrew's; and the advice was, not to blister, according to the old practice, and the opinion of the learned Dr. Simson, brother of the celebrated geometrician at Glasgow.

[k] Widow of the eminent anatomist of that name, and formerly Miss STEVENSON, to whom several of Dr. Franklin's letters on Philosophical subjects are addressed.

[l] Refers to Mrs. Hewson's mother.

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the time in looking for the first. I wrote with that; and hope it came to hand. I therein asked your counsel about my coming to England: on reflection I think I can from my knowledge of your prudence foresee what it will be; viz. not to come too soon, lest it should seem braving and insulting some who ought to be respected. I shall therefore omit that journey till I am near going to America, and then just step over to take leave of my friends, and spend a few days with you. I purpose bringing Ben[m] with me, and perhaps may leave him under your care.

At length we are in peace, God be praised; and long, very long may it continue. All wars are follies, very expensive and very mischievous ones: when will mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their differences by arbitration? were they to do it even by the cast of a die, it would be better than by fighting and destroying each other.

Spring is coming on, when travelling will be delightful. Can you not, when your children are all at school, make a little party and take a trip hither? I have now a large house, delightfully situated, in which I could accommodate you and two or three friends; and I am but half an hour's drive from Paris.

In looking forward, twenty-five years seems a long period; but in looking back, how short! could you imagine that 'tis now full a quarter of a century since we were first acquainted! it was in 1757. During the greatest part of the time I lived in the same house with my dear deceased friend your mother; of course you and I saw and conversed with each other much and often. It is to all our honors, that in all that time we never had among us the smallest misunderstanding. Our friendship has been all clear sunshine, without any the least cloud in its hemisphere. Let me conclude by saying to you what I have had too frequent occasions to say to my other

[m] Benjamin Franklin Bache, a grandson of Dr. Franklin, by his daughter Sarah; he was the first Editor of the AURORA at Philadelphia; he died of yellow fever in September, 1798.

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remaining old friends, *the fewer we become, the more let us love one another.*

Adieu, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Lord Bishop of St. Asaph, (Dr. Shipley.)

Passy, March 17, 1783.

I RECEIVED with great pleasure my dear and respected friend's letter of the fifth instant, as it informed me of the welfare of a family I so much esteem and love.

The clamor against the peace in your parliament, would alarm me for its duration, if I were not of opinion with you, that the attack is rather against the minister. I am confident none of the opposition would have made a better peace for England, if they had been in his place; at least I am sure that lord Stormont, who seems loudest in railing at it, is not the man that could have mended it. My reasons I will give you, when I have, what I hope to have, the great happiness of seeing you once more and conversing with you. They talk much of there being no reciprocity in our treaty; they think nothing then of our passing over in silence the atrocities committed by their troops, and demanding no satisfaction for their wanton burnings and devastations of our fair towns and countries. They have heretofore confest the war to be unjust, and nothing is plainer in reasoning, than that the mischiefs done in an unjust war should be repaired. Can Englishmen be so partial to themselves, as to imagine they have a right to plunder and destroy as much as they please, and then without satisfying for the injuries they have done, to have peace on equal terms? We were favorable, and did not demand what justice entitled us to. We shall probably be blamed for it by our constituents: and I still think it would be the interest of England voluntarily to offer reparation of those injuries, and effect it as much as may be in her power. But this is an interest she will never see.

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Let us now forgive and forget. Let each country seek its advancement in its own internal advantages of arts and agriculture, not in retarding or preventing the prosperity of the other. America will, with God's blessing, become a great and happy country; and England, if she has at length gained wisdom, will have gained something more valuable, and more essential to her prosperity, than all she has lost; and will still be a great and respectable nation. Her great disease at present, is the number and enormous salaries and emoluments of office. Avarice and ambition are strong passions, and separately act with great force on the human mind; but when both are united and may be gratified in the same object, their violence is almost irresistible, and they hurry men headlong into factions and contentions destructive of all good government. As long therefore as these great emoluments subsist, your parliament will be a stormy sea, and your public councils confounded by private interests. But it requires much public spirit and virtue to abolish them; more perhaps than can now be found in a nation so long corrupted.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Sir Joseph Banks.

Passy, July 27, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your very kind letter by Dr. Blagden, and esteem myself much honored by your friendly remembrance. I have been too much and too closely engaged in public affairs since his being here, to enjoy all the benefit of his conversation you were so good as to intend me. I hope soon to have more leisure, and to spend a part of it in those studies that are much more agreeable to me than political operations.

I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable creatures, have reason and sense enough to settle their differences without cut-

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ting throats: for in my opinion *there never was a good war, nor a bad peace.* What vast additions to the conveniencies and comforts of living might mankind have acquired, if the money spent in wars had been employed in works of public utility. What an extension of agriculture even to the tops of our mountains; what rivers rendered navigable, or joined by canals; what bridges, aqueducts, new roads, and other public works, edifices and improvements, rendering England a complete paradise, might not have been obtained, by spending those millions in doing good which in the last war have been spent in doing mischief; in bringing misery into thousands of families, and destroying the lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labour!

I am pleased with the late astronomical discoveries made by our society. Furnished as all Europe now is with academies of science, with nice instruments and the spirit of experiment, the progress of human knowledge will be rapid, and discoveries made of which we have at present no conception. I begin to be almost sorry I was born so soon, since I cannot have the happiness of knowing what will be known one hundred years hence.

I wish continued success to the labours of the Royal Society, and that you may long adorn their chair; being with the highest esteem, dear sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

Dr. Blagden will acquaint you with the experiment of a vast globe sent up into the air, much talked of here and which if prosecuted may furnish means of new knowledge.

To Brand Hollis, Esq.

Passy, near Paris, October 5, 1783.

SIR,

I RECEIVED but lately (though sent in June) your most valuable present of the Memoirs of Thomas Hollis, Esq., who was truly, as you describe him in your letter, a good "citizen of the world and a faithful friend of America."

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America too is extremely sensible of his benevolence and great beneficence towards her, and will ever revere his memory. These volumes are a proof of what I have sometimes had occasion to say, in encouraging people to undertake difficult public services, that it is prodigious the quantity of good that may be done by one man, *if he will make a business of it.* It is equally surprising to think of the very little that is done by the many; for such is the general frivolity of the employments and amusements of the rank we call *gentlemen*, that every century may have seen three successions of a set of a thousand each in every kingdom of Europe, (gentlemen too, of equal or superior fortune) no one of which set, in the course of their lives, have done the good effected by this man alone! Good, not only to his own nation, and to his cotemporaries, but to distant countries, and to late posterity: for such must be the effect of his multiplying and distributing copies of the works of our best English writers, on subjects the most important to the welfare of society.

I knew him personally but little. I sometimes met with him at the Royal Society and the Society of Arts, but he appeared shy of my acquaintance, though he often sent me valuable presents, such as Hamilton's works, Sydney's works, &c. which are now among the most precious ornaments of my library. We might possibly, if we had been more intimate, have concerted some useful operations together; but he loved to do his good alone and secretly, and I find besides, in perusing these memoirs, that I was a doubtful character with him. I do not respect him less for his error; and I am obliged to the editors for the justice they have done me. They have made a little mistake in page 400, where a letter which appeared in a London paper, January 7th, 1768, is said to have been written by Mr. Adams. It was written by me, and is reprinted in Mr. Vaughan's collection of my political pieces, p. 231.* This erratum is of no great importance, but may be corrected in a future edition.

* This paper is entitled Causes of the American Discontents before 1768, and is to be found in Vol. IV. of this edition, p. 93.

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I see Mr. Hollis had a collection of curious medals. If he had been still living, I should certainly have sent him one of the medals that I have caused to be struck here. I think the countenance of my *Liberty* would have pleased him. I suppose you possess the collection, and have the same taste. I beg you therefore to accept of one of these medals as a mark of my respect, and believe me to be with sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To His Excellency John Jay, Esq.

Passy, January 6, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 26th past and immediately sent that inclosed to Mrs. Jay whom I saw a few days since with the children, all perfectly well. It is a happy thing, that the little ones are so finely past the small pox, and I congratulate you upon it most cordially.

It is true, as you have heard, that I have the stone, but not that I have had thoughts of being cut for it. It is as yet very tolerable. It gives me no pain but when in a carriage on the pavement, or when I make some sudden quick movement. If I can prevent its growing larger which I hope to do by abstemious living and gentle exercise, I can go on pretty comfortably with it to the end of my journey, which can now be at no great distance. I am cheerful, enjoy the company of my friends, sleep well, have sufficient appetite, and my stomach performs well its functions. The latter is very material to the preservation of health. I therefore take no drugs lest I should disorder it. You may judge that my disease is not very grievous, since I am more afraid of the medicines than of the malady.

It gives me pleasure to learn from you that my friends still retain their regard for me. I long to see them again, but I doubt I shall hardly accomplish it. If our commission for the treaty of commerce were arrived, and we were at liberty to treat in England, I might then come over to you, supposing the English ministry disposed to enter into such a treaty.

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I have as you observe some enemies in England, but they are my enemies as an *American;* I have also two or three in America, who are my enemies as a *minister;* but I thank God, there are not in the whole world any who are my enemies as a *man;* for by his grace, through a long life I have been enabled so to conduct myself, that there does not exist a human being who can justly say, Ben Franklin has wronged me. This, my friend, is in old age a comfortable reflection. You too have, or may have, your enemies; but let not that render you unhappy. If you make a right use of them, they will do you more good than harm. They point out to us our faults; they put us upon our guard, and help us to live more correctly.

My grandsons are sensible of the honor of your remembrance, and join their respectful compliments and best wishes, with those of, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Bache.[n]

Passy, January 26, 1784.

MY DEAR CHILD,

YOUR care in sending me the newspapers is very agreeable to me. I received by captain Barney those relating to the *Cincinnati.* My opinion of the institution cannot be of much importance: I only wonder, that when the united wisdom of our nation had, in the articles of confederation, manifested their dislike of establishing ranks of nobility, by authority either of the congress or of any particular state, a number of private persons should think proper to distinguish themselves and their posterity, from their fellow citizens, and for an order of *hereditary knights,* in direct opposition to the solemnly declared sense of their country. I imagine it must be likewise contrary to the good sense of most of those

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[n] Dr. Franklin's only daughter, married to Richard Bache, a merchant in Philadelphia.

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drawn into it, by the persuasion of its projectors, who have been too much struck with the ribbands and crosses they have seen hanging to the button holes of foreign officers. And I suppose those who disapprove of it, have not hitherto given it much opposition, from a principle somewhat like that of your good mother, relating to punctilious persons who are always exacting little observances of respect, that "*if people can be pleased with small matters, it is a pity but they should have them.*" In this view, perhaps, I should not myself, if my advice had been asked, have objected to their wearing their ribband and badge themselves according to their fancy, though I certainly should to the entailing it as an honor on their posterity. For, honor worthily obtained, (as that for example of our officers) is in its nature a *personal* thing, and incommunicable to any but those who had some share in obtaining it. Thus among the Chinese, the most ancient, and from long experience the wisest of nations, honor does not *descend*, but *ascends*. If a man from his learning, his wisdom, or his valor, is promoted by the emperor to the rank of Mandarin, his parents are immediately entitled to all the same ceremonies of respect from the people, that are established as due to the Mandarin himself; on the supposition that it must have been *owing to the education, instruction and good example afforded him by his parents*, that he was rendered capable of serving the public. This *ascending* honor is therefore useful to the state, as it encourages parents to give their children a good and virtuous education. But the *descending honor*, to a posterity who could have no share in obtaining it, is not only groundless and absurd, but often hurtful to that posterity, since it is apt to make them proud, disdaining to be employed in useful arts, and thence falling into poverty, and all the meannesses, servility, and wretchedness attending it; which is the present case with much of what is called the *noblesse* in Europe. Or if, to keep up the dignity of the family, estates are entailed entire on the eldest male heir, another pest to industry and improvement of the country is introduced, which will be followed by all the odious mixture of pride, and

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beggary, and idleness that have half depopulated and deculti-vated Spain; occasioning continual extinction of families by the discouragements of marriage, and neglect in the improvement of estates. I wish therefore that the Cincinnati, if they must go on with their project, would direct the badges of their order to be worn by their fathers and mothers, instead of handing them down to their children. It would be a good precedent and might have good effects. It would also be a kind of obedience to the fifth commandment, in which God enjoins us to *honor our father and mother*, but has no where directed us to honor our *children*. And certainly no mode of honoring those immediate authors of our being can be more effectual, than that of doing praiseworthy actions, which reflect honor on those who gave us our education; or more becoming than that of manifesting, by some public expression or token, that it is to their instruction and example we ascribe the merit of those actions.

But the absurdity of *descending honors* is not a mere matter of philosophical opinion, it is capable of mathematical demonstration. A man's son, for instance, is but half of his family, the other half belonging to the family of his wife. His son too, marrying into another family, his share in the grandson is but a fourth: in the great grandson by the same process it is but an eighth. In the next generation a sixteenth; the next a thirty-second; the next a sixty-fourth; the next an hundred and twenty-eighth; the next a two hundred and fifty-sixth; and the next a five hundred and twelfth: thus in nine generations which will not require more than three hundred years, (no very great antiquity for a family) our present chevalier of the order of Cincinnatus's share in the then existing knight, will be but a 512th part; which, allowing the present certain fidelity of American wives to be insured down through all those nine generations, is so small a consideration, that methinks no reasonable man would hazard for the sake of it, the disagreeable consequences of the jealousy, envy, and ill-will of his countrymen.

Let us go back with our calculation from this young noble,

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the 512th part of the present Knight, through his nine generations till we return to the year of the institution. He must have had a father and mother, they are two; each of them had a father and mother, they are four. Those of the next preceding generation will be eight, the next sixteen, the next thirty-two, the next sixty-four, the next one hundred and twenty-eight, the next two hundred and fifty-six, and the ninth in this retrocession five hundred and twelve, who must be now existing, and all contribute their proportion of this future *Chevalier de Cincinnatus*. These, with the rest, make together as follows:—

	2
	4
	8
	16
	32
	64
	128
	256
	512
Total.....	1022

One thousand and twenty-two men and women, contributors to the formation of one knight. And if we are to have a thousand of these future knights, there must be now and hereafter existing one million and twenty-two thousand fathers and mothers, who are to contribute to their production; unless a part of the number are employed in making more knights than one. Let us strike off then the 22,000, on the supposition of this double employ, and then consider whether after a reasonable estimation of the number of rogues, and fools, and scoundrels, and prostitutes, that are mixed with, and help to make up necessarily their million of predecessors, posterity will have much reason to boast of the noble blood of the then existing set of chevaliers of Cincinnatus. The future genealogists too, of these chevaliers, in proving the lineal de-

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scent of their honor through so many generations, (even supposing honor capable in its nature of descending,) will only prove the small share of this honor which can be justly claimed by any one of them, since the above simple process in arithmetic makes it quite plain and clear, that in proportion as the antiquity of the family shall augment, the right to the honor of the ancestor will diminish; and a few generations more would reduce it to something so small as to be very near an absolute nullity. I hope therefore that the order will drop this part of their project, and content themselves as the knights of the garter, bath, thistle, St. Louis, and other orders of Europe do, with a life enjoyment of their little badge and ribband, and let the distinction die with those who have merited it. This I imagine will give no offence. For my own part, I shall think it a convenience when I go into company where there may be faces unknown to me, if I discover by this badge, the persons who merit some particular expression of my respect; and it will save modest virtue the trouble of calling for our regard, by awkward round-about intimations of having been heretofore employed as officers in the continental service.

The gentleman who made the voyage to France to provide the ribbands and medals, has executed his commission. To me they seem tolerably done; but all such things are criticised. Some find fault with the latin, as wanting classical elegance and correctness; and since our nine universities were not able to furnish better latin, it was a pity, they say, that the mottos had not been in English. Others object to the title, as not properly assumable by any but general Washington, and a few others, who served without pay. Others object to the bald eagle, as looking too much like a *Dindon* or turkey. For my own part, I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad moral character: he does not get his living honestly: you may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labour of the fishing hawk; and when that diligent bird has at length taken a

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fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him, and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is never in good case, but like those among men who live by sharping and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward: the little *king bird*, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district. He is therefore by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *king birds* from our country; though exactly fit for that order of knights which the French call *Chevaliers d' Industrie*. I am on this account, not displeased that the figure is not known as a bald eagle, but looks more like a turkey. For in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours; the first of the species seen in Europe, being brought to France by the Jesuits from Canada, and served up at the wedding table of Charles the Ninth. He is besides, (though a little vain and silly 'tis true, but not the worse emblem for that) a bird of courage, and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British guards, who should presume to invade his farm yard with a red coat on.

I shall not enter into the criticisms made upon their Latin. The gallant officers of America may not have the merit of being great scholars, but they undoubtedly merit much as brave soldiers from their country, which should therefore not leave them merely to *fame* for their *virtutis premium*, which is one of their Latin mottos. Their *esto perpetua*, another, is an excellent wish, if they meant it for their country; bad, if intended for their order. The states should not only restore to them the *omnia* of their first motto,° which many of them have left and lost, but pay them justly, and reward them generously. They should not be suffered to remain with all their new created

° *Omnia reliquit servare rempublicam.*

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chivalry *entirely* in the situation of the gentleman in the story which their *omnia reliquit* reminds me of. You know every thing makes me recollect some story. He had built a very fine house, and thereby much impaired his fortune. He had a pride however in showing it to his acquaintance. One of them, after viewing it all, remarked a motto over the door ŌIA VANITAS. What, says he, is the meaning of this ŌIA 'tis a word I don't understand. I will tell you said the gentleman: I had a mind to have the motto cut on a piece of smooth marble, but there was not room for it between the ornaments, to be put in characters large enough to be read. I therefore made use of a contraction antiently very common in Latin manuscripts, whereby the *m's* and *n's* in words are omitted, and the omission noted by a little dash above, which you may see there, so that the word is *omnia*, OMNIA VANITAS. O, said his friend, I now comprehend the meaning of your motto, it relates to your edifice; and signifies, that if you have abridged your *omnia*, you have nevertheless left your VANITAS legible at full length.

I am, as ever, your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

To His Excellency Henry Laurens, Esq.

Passy, February 12, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your favor of the 3d instant by your son, with the newspapers, for which I thank you. The disorders of that government whose constitution has been so much praised, are come to a height that threatens some violent convulsion, if not a dissolution; and its physicians do not even seem to guess at the cause of the disease, and therefore prescribe insufficient remedies such as *place bills, more equal representation, more frequent elections*, &c. &c. In my humble opinion, the malady consists in the *enormous salaries, emoluments, and patronage* of great offices. *Ambition and Avarice*

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are separately strong passions: When they are united in pursuit of the same object, they are too strong to be governed by common prudence, or influenced by public spirit and love of country; they drive men irresistibly into factions, cabals, dissentions, and violent divisions, always mischievous to public councils, destructive to the peace of society, and sometimes fatal to its existence. As long as the immense profits of these offices subsist, members of the shortest and most equally chosen parliaments will have them in view, and contend for them, and their contentions will have all the same ruinous consequences. To me then there seems to be but one effectual remedy, and that not likely to be adopted by so corrupt a nation; which is, to abolish these profits, and make every place of *honor*, a place of *burthen*. By that means the effect of one of the passions abovementioned would be taken away, and something would be added to counteract the other. Thus the number of competitors for great offices would be diminished, and the efforts of those who still would obtain them moderated.

Thank God we have now less connection with the affairs of these people, and are more at liberty to take care of our own, which I hope we shall manage better.

We have a terrible winter here, such another in this country is not remembered by any man living. The snow has been thick upon the ground ever since Christmas; and the frost constant.

My grandson joins in best compliments to yourself and Miss Laurens. With sincere esteem and affection I have the honor to be,

Dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To W. Strahan, Esq., M. P. King's Printer, London.

Passy, Feb. 16, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED and read with pleasure your kind letter of of the first instant, as it informed me of the welfare of you

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and yours. I am glad the accounts you have from your kinswoman at Philadelphia are agreeable, and I shall be happy if any recommendations from me can be serviceable to Dr. Ross, or any others, friends of yours going to America.

Your arguments persuading me to come once more to England, are very powerful. To be sure I long to see again my friends there, whom I love abundantly: but there are difficulties and objections of several kinds, which at present I don't see how to get over.

I lament with you the political disorders England at present labors under. Your papers are full of strange accounts of anarchy and confusion in America, of which we know nothing, while your own affairs are really in a situation deplorable. In my humble opinion, the root of the evil lies not so much in too long, or too unequally chosen parliaments, as in the enormous salaries, emoluments, and patronage of your great officers; and that you will never be at rest till they are all abolished, and every place of *honor* made at the same time, instead of a place of profit, a place of expense and burthen. Ambition and avarice are each of them strong passions, and when they are united in the same persons, and have the same objects in view for their gratification, they are too strong for public spirit and love of country, and are apt to produce the most violent factions and contentions. They should therefore be separated, and made to act one against the other. Those places to speak in our old stile (brother type) may be good for the CHAPEL, but they are bad for the master, as they create constant quarrels that hinder the business. For example, here are two months that your government has been employed in *getting its form to press;* which is not yet fit to *work on,* every page of it being *squabbled,* and the whole ready to fall into *pye.* The founts too must be very scanty, or strangely *out of sorts,* since your *compositors* cannot find either *upper* or *lower-case letters* sufficient to set the word ADMINISTRATION, but are forced to be continually *turning for them.* However, to return to common (though perhaps too saucy) language, don't despair; you have still one resource left, and

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that not a bad one, since it may reunite the empire. We have some remains of affection for you, and shall always be ready to receive and take care of you in case of distress. So if you have not sense and virtue enough to govern yourselves, e'en dissolve your present old crazy constitution, and send members to congress.

You will say my *advice* smells of *Madeira*. You are right. This foolish letter is mere chit-chat *between ourselves* over the *second bottle*. If, therefore, you show it to any body (except our indulgent friends, Dagge and lady Strahan) I will positively *solless* you.

Yours ever most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Henry Laurens, Esq.

Passy, March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I WRITE this in great pain from the gout in both feet; but my young friend your son having informed me that he sets out for London to-morrow, I could not slip the opportunity, as perhaps it is the only safe one that may occur before your departure for America. I wish mine was as near. I think I have reason to complain that I am so long without an answer from congress to my request of recall. I wish rather to die in my own country than here; and though the upper part of the building appears yet tolerably firm, yet being undermined by the stone and gout united, its fall cannot be far distant. You are so good as to offer me your friendly services. You cannot do me one more acceptable at present, than that of forwarding my dismission. In all other respects as well as that, I shall ever look on your friendship as an honor to me; being with sincere and great esteem, dear Sir, &c. &c.

P. S. March 13, 1784.

Having had a tolerable night, I find myself something better this morning. In reading over my letter I perceive an

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omission of my thanks for your kind assurances of never forsaking my defence should there be need. I apprehend that the violent antipathy of a certain person to me, may have produced some calumnies, which what you have seen and heard here may enable you to refute. You will thereby exceedingly oblige one, who has lived beyond all other ambition than that of dying with the fair character he has long endeavored to deserve. As to my infallibility, which you do not undertake to maintain, I am too modest myself to claim it, that is *in general:* though when we come *to particulars*, I, like other people, give it up with difficulty. Steele says, that the difference between the church of Rome, and the church of England on that point, is only this; that the one pretends to be *infallible*, and the other to be *never in the wrong*. In this latter sense, we are most of us church of England men, though few of us confess it and express it so naturally and frankly as a certain lady here, who said,—I don't know how it happens, but I meet with nobody, except myself, that is *always* in the right. *Il n'y a que moi qui a toujours raison.*

My grandson joins me in affectionate respects to you and the young lady, with best wishes for your health and prosperity.

Yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Walter, Printer, London.

Passy, April 17, 1784.

SIR,

I HAVE received a book, for which, I understand I am obliged to you, the Introduction to Logography. I have read it with attention, and as far as I understand it, am much pleased with it. I do not perfectly comprehend the arrangement of his cases; but the reduction of the number of pieces by the roots of words, and their different terminations is extremely ingenious; and I like much the idea of cementing the letters, instead of casting words or syllables, which I formerly at-

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tempted and succeeded in having invented a mould, and method by which I could in, a few minutes form a matrice and adjust it, of any word in any fount at pleasure, and proceed to cast from it. I send inclosed a specimen of some of my terminations, and would willingly instruct Mr. Johnson in the method if he desired it, but he has a better. He mentions some improvements that have been proposed, but takes no notice of one published here at Paris, in 1776; so I suppose he has neither seen nor heard of it. It is in a quarto pamphlet, intitled, *Nouveau Système Typographique, ou moyen de diminuer, de moitié, dans toutes les imprimeries de l'Europe, le travail et les frais de composition, de correction, de distribution, découvert en* 1774, *par Madame de* * * *. Frustra fit per plura quod potest fieri per pauciora. *A Paris de l'imprimerie royale,* MDCCLXXVI. It is dedicated to the king, who was at the expense of the experiments. Two commissaries were named to examine and render an account of them; they were M. Desmarets, of the Academy of Sciences, and M. Barbou, an eminent printer. Their report concludes thus; "Nous nous contenterons de dire ici que M. de St. Paul a rempli les engagemens qu'il avoit contractés avec le Gouvernement; que ses experiences projetées ont été conduites avec beaucoup de méthode et d'intelligence de sa part; et que par des calculs longs et pénibles, qui sont le fruit d'un grand nombre de combinaisons raisonnées, il en a deduit plusieurs résultats qui meritent d'être proposés aux artistes, et qui nous paroissent propres à éclairer la pratique de l'imprimerie actuelle, et à en abréger certainement les procédées. Son projet ne peut que gagner aux conradictions qu'il essuiera sans doute, de la part des gens de l'art. A Paris, le 8 Janvier, 1776." The pamphlet consists of sixty-six pages, containing a number of tables of words and parts of words, explanations of those tables, calculations, answers to objections, &c. I will endeavour to get one to send you if you if you desire it: mine is bound up with others in a volume. It was after seeing this piece that I cast the syllables I send you a sample of. I have not heard that any of the printers here make at present the

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least use of the invention of Madame de * * *. You will observe that it pretended only to lessen the work by one-half; Mr. Johnson's method lessens it three-fourths. I should be glad to know with what the letters are cemented. I think cementing better than casting them together, because if one letter happens to be battered, it may be taken away and and another cemented in its place. I received no letter with the pamphlet.*

I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Benjamin Webb.

Passy, April 22, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED yours of the 15th instant, and the memorial it inclosed. The account they give of your situation grieves me. I send you herewith a bill for ten Louis d'ors. I do not pretend to *give* such a sum; I only *lend* it to you. When you shall return to your country with a good character, you cannot fail of getting into some business that will in time enable you to pay all your debts: in that case, when you meet with another honest man in similar distress, you must pay me by lending this sum to him; enjoining him to discharge the debt by a like operation when he shall be able, and shall meet with such another opportunity. I hope it may

* The *logographic* method of printing was tried by a most diligent, and laborious series of experiments, at an enormous expense, by Mr. Walter, who knew nothing of the art himself. Several works were printed, as was the newspaper called the *Times* originally, by that method. But it really failed; some little time was saved in the *compositors'* part, but it was lost in *distribution*. The casting was also triple the cost of single types; for even for the logography, single letters were first cast with one half the shank of the letter shaped, in carpenters' language, like a *tenon;* these were composed into words or parts of words, and put into a common matrix, so that the part resembling the *mortice* should be cast round them; when they were dressed like common types. It was an art travelling backward. The expense was enormous and it failed. It was exactly the same method as that pursued in France. D.

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thus go through many hands before it meets with a knave that will stop its progress. This is a trick of mine for doing a deal of good with a little money. I am not rich enough to afford *much* in good works, and so am obliged to be cunning and make the most of a *little*. With best wishes for the success of your memorial, and your future prosperity, I am, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Rev. Dr. Mather, Boston.

Passy, May 12, 1784.

REV. SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter with your excellent advice to the people of the United States, which I read with great pleasure, and hope it will be duly regarded. Such writings though they may be lightly passed over by many readers, yet if they make a deep impression on one active mind in an hundred, the effects may be considerable. Permit me to mention one little instance, which though it relates to myself, will not be quite uninteresting to you. When I was a boy I met with a book entitled *Essays to do Good*, which I think was written by your father. It had been so little regarded by a former possessor, that several leaves of it were torn out: but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking, as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good*, than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book. You mention your being in your 78th year: I am in my 79th; we are grown old together. It is now more than sixty years since I left Boston, but I remember well both your father and grandfather, having heard them both in the pulpit, and seen them in their houses. The last time I saw your father was in the beginning of 1724, when I visited him after my first trip to Pennsylvania. He received me in his library,

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and on my taking leave shewed me a shorter way out of the house through a narrow passage, which was crossed by a beam over head. We were still talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning partly towards him, when he said hastily, *stoop, stoop!* I did not understand him till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of giving instruction, and upon this he said to me, *you are young, and have the world before you;* STOOP *as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps.* This advice thus beat into my head has frequently been of use to me, and I often think of it, when I see pride mortified, and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high.

I long much to see again my native place, and to lay my bones there. I left it in 1723; I visited it in 1733, 1743, 1753, and 1763. In 1773, I was in England; in 1775, I had a sight of it, but could not enter, it being in possession of the enemy. I did hope to have been there in 1783, but could not obtain my dismission from this employment here; and now I fear I shall never have that happiness. My best wishes however attend my dear country. *Esto perpetua.* It is now blest with an excellent constitution; may it last forever!

This powerful monarchy continues its friendship for the United States. It is a friendship of the utmost importance to our security, and should be carefully cultivated. Britain has not yet well digested the loss of its dominion over us, and has still at times some flattering hopes of recovering it. Accidents may increase those hopes, and encourage dangerous attempts. A breach between us and France, would infallibly bring the English again upon our backs; and yet we have some wild heads among our countrymen, who are endeavoring to weaken that connection! Let us preserve our reputation by performing our engagements; our credit by fulfilling our contracts; and friends by gratitude and kindness; for we know not how soon we may again have occasion for all of them. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Dr. Percival.

Passy, July 17, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED yesterday by Mr. White, your kind letter of May 11th, with the most agreeable present of your new book.[p] I read it all before I slept, which is a proof of the good effects your happy manner has of drawing your reader on, by mixing little anecdotes and historical facts with your instructions. Be pleased to accept my grateful acknowledgments for the pleasure it has afforded me.

It is astonishing that the murderous practice of duelling, which you so justly condemn, should continue so long in vogue. Formerly when duels were used to determine law-suits, from an opinion that Providence would in every instance favor truth and right, with victory, they were excusable. At present, they decide nothing. A man says something, which another tells him is a lie. They fight; but whichever is killed the point in dispute remains unsettled. To this purpose they have a pleasant little story here. A gentleman in a coffee-house desired another to sit further from him. Why so? Because, sir, you stink. That is an affront, and you must fight me. I will fight you if you insist upon it; but I do not see how that will mend the matter. For if you kill me, I shall stink too; and if I kill you, you will stink, if possible, worse than you do at present. How can such miserable sinners as we are entertain so much pride, as to conceit that every offence against our imagined honor merits *death?* These petty princes in their own opinion would call that sovereign a tyrant, who should put one of them to death for a little uncivil language, though pointed at his sacred person: Yet every one of them makes himself judge in his own cause, condemns the offender without a jury, and undertakes himself to be the executioner.

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[p] Moral and Literary Dissertations, 2d edition.

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With sincere and great esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. Our friend, Mr. Vaughan, may perhaps communicate to you some conjectures of mine relating to the cold of last winter, which I sent him in return for the observations on cold of professor Wilson. If he should, and you think them worthy so much notice, you may show them to your Philosophical Society,[q] to which I wish all imaginable success. Their rules appear to me excellent.

To Messrs. Weems and Gant, Citizens of the United States, London.

Passy, near Paris, July 18, 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

ON receipt of your letter, acquainting me that the Archbishop of Canterbury[r] would not permit you to be ordained unless you took the oath of allegiance; I applied to a clergyman of my acquaintance, for information on the subject of your obtaining ordination here. His opinion was, that it could not be done; and that if it were done, you would be required to vow obedience to the archbishop of Paris. I next inquired of the Pope's Nuncio, whether you might not be ordained by their bishop in America, powers being sent him for that purpose, if he has them not already. The answer was, the thing is impossible, unless the gentlemen become Catholics.

This is an affair of which I know very little, and therefore I may ask questions and propose means that are improper or impracticable. But what is the necessity of your being connected with the church of England? Would it not be as well if you were of the church of Ireland? The religion is

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[q] The *Philosophical Society of Manchester*, of which Dr. Percival was one of the principal founders and ornaments.

[r] Dr. Moore.

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the same, though there is a different set of bishops and archbishops. Perhaps if you were to apply to the bishop of Derry,* who is a man of liberal sentiments, he might give you orders as of that church. If both Britain and Ireland refuse you; and I am not sure that the bishops of Denmark or Sweden would ordain you, unless you became Lutherans: what is to be done? Next to becoming Presbyterians, the Episcopalian clergy of America, in my humble opinion, cannot do better than to follow the example of the first clergy of Scotland, soon after the conversion of that country to christianity; who when their king had built the cathedral of St. Andrews, and requested the king of Northumberland to lend his bishops to ordain one for them, that their clergy might not as heretofore be obliged to go to Northumberland for orders, and their request was refused: they assembled in the cathedral, and the mitre, crozier, and robes of a bishop being laid upon the altar, they, after earnest prayers for direction in their choice, elected one of their own number; when the king said to him, *Arise, go to the altar, and receive your office at the hand of God.* His brethren led him to the altar, robed him, put the crozier in his hand, and the mitre on his head, and he became the first bishop of Scotland.

If the British islands were sunk in the sea (and the surface of this globe has suffered greater changes) you would probably take some such method as this: and if they persist in denying you ordination, it is the same thing. An hundred years hence, when the people are more enlightened, it will be wondered at, that men in America, qualified by their learning and piety to pray for and instruct their neighbors, should not be permitted to do it till they had made a voyage of 6000 miles out and home, to ask leave of a cross old gentleman at Canterbury: who seems, by your account, to have as little regard for the souls of the people of Maryland, as king William's attorney general, Seymour, had for those of Virginia. The reverend commissary Blair, who projected

* Lord Bristol.

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the college of that province, and was in England to solicit benefactions and a charter, relates, that the queen in the king's absence, having ordered Seymour to draw up the charter which was to be given, with 2000*l.* in money, he opposed the grant; saying that the nation was engaged in an expensive war, that the money was wanted for better purposes, and he did not see the least occasion for a college in Virginia. Blair represented to him, that its intention was to educate and qualify young men to be ministers of the gospel, much wanted there; and begged Mr. attorney would consider that the people of Virginia had souls to be saved as well as the people of England. *Souls!* (said he,) *damn your souls. Make tobacco!*

I have the honor to be, gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To B. Vaughan, Esq.

Passy, July 26, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE received several letters from you lately, dated June 16, June 30, and July 13. I thank you for the information respecting the proceedings of your West India merchants, or rather planters. The restraints, whatever they may be, upon our commerce with your islands, will prejudice their inhabitants, I apprehend, more than us. It is wonderful how preposterously the affairs of this world are managed. Naturally one would imagine that the interests of a few particulars, should give way to general interest. But particulars manage their affairs with so much more application, industry, and address than the public do theirs, that general interest most commonly gives way to particular. We assemble parliaments and councils to have the benefit of their collected wisdom, but we necessarily have at the same time the inconvenience of their collected passions, prejudices, and private interests. By the help of these, artful men overpower the wisdom, and dupe its possessors; and if we may judge by the acts, decrees, and edicts all the world over for regulating commerce, an assembly of wise men is the greatest fool upon earth.

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I have received Cook's voyages, which you put Mr. Oswald in the way of sending to me. By some mistake the first volume was omitted, and instead of it a duplicate sent of the third. If there is a good print of Cook, I should be glad to have it, being personally acquainted with him. I thank you for the pamphlets by Mr. Estlin. Every thing you send me gives me pleasure; to receive your account would give me more than all.

I am told that the little pamphlet of *advice to such as would remove to America*,[t] is reprinted in London with my name to it, which I would rather had been omitted; but wish to see a copy when you have an opportunity of sending it.

Mr. Hartley has long continued here in expectation of instructions for making a treaty of commerce, but they do not come, and I begin to suspect none are intended; though perhaps the delay is only occasioned by the over-great burthen of business at present on the shoulders of your ministers. We do not press the matter, but are content to wait till they can see their interest respecting America more clearly, being certain that we can shift as well as you without a treaty.

The conjectures I sent you concerning the cold of last winter still appear to me probable: the moderate season in Russia and Canada do not weaken them. I think our frost here began about the 24th of December, in America the 12th of January. I thank you for recommending to me Mr. Arbuthnot; I have had pleasure in his conversation. I wish much to see the new pieces you had in hand. I congratulate you on the return of your wedding-day, and wish for your sake and Mrs. Vaughan's, that you may see a great many of them, all as happy as the first.

I like the young stranger very much: he seems sensible, ingenious, and modest, has a good deal of instruction, and makes judicious remarks. He will probably distinguish himself advantageously.

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[t] See Miscellaneous Papers, political, Vol. V, p. 412, of this edition.

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I have not yet heard from Mr. Nairne.

Dr. Price's pamphlet of advice to America, is a good one, and will do good. You ask "what remedy I have for the growing luxury of my country, which gives so much *offence* to all *English travellers* without exception." I answer, that I think it exaggerated, and that travellers are not good judges, whether our luxury is growing or diminishing. Our people are hospitable, and have indeed too much pride in displaying upon their tables before strangers the plenty and variety that our country affords. They have the vanity too of sometimes borrowing one another's plate to entertain more splendidly. Strangers being invited from house to house, meeting every day with a feast, imagine what they see is the ordinary way of living of all the families where they dine; when perhaps each family lives a week after upon the remains of the dinner given. It is, I own, a folly in our people to give *such offence* to *English travellers*. The first part of the proverb is thereby verified, that *fools make feasts*. I wish in this case the other were as true, *and wise men eat them*. These travellers might, one would think, find some fault they could more decently reproach us with, than that of our excessive civility to them as strangers.

I have not indeed yet thought of a remedy for luxury; I am not sure that in a great state it is capable of a remedy: nor that the evil is in itself always so great as it is represented. Suppose we include in the definition of luxury all unnecessary expense, and then let us consider whether laws to prevent such expense are possible to be executed in a great country; and whether, if they could be executed, our people generally would be happier, or even richer. Is not the hope of one day being able to purchase and enjoy luxuries a great spur to labour and industry? May not luxury therefore produce more than it consumes, if without such a spur people would be, as they are naturally enough inclined to be, lazy and indolent? To this purpose I remember a circumstance. The skipper of a shallop, employed between Cape May and Philadelphia, had done us some small service, for which he refused pay. My

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wife understanding that he had a daughter, sent her as a present a new fashioned cap. Three years after, this skipper being at my house, with an old farmer of Cape May, his passenger, he mentioned the cap, and how much his daughter had been pleased with it; but, said he, it proved a dear cap to our congregation. How so? When my daughter appeared in it at meeting, it was so much admired, that all the girls resolved to get such caps from Philadelphia; and my wife and I computed that the whole could not cost less than a hundred pounds. True, said the farmer, but you do not tell all the story; I think the cap was nevertheless an advantage to us; for it was the first thing that set our girls upon knitting worsted mittens for sale at Philadelphia, that they might have wherewithal to buy caps and ribbands there; and you know that *that* industry has continued, and is likely to continue and increase to a much greater value, and answer better purposes. Upon the whole, I was more reconciled to this little piece of luxury, since not only the girls were made happier by having fine caps, but the Philadelphians, by the supply of warm mittens.

In our commercial towns upon the sea-coast, fortunes will occasionally be made. Some of those who grow rich, will be prudent, live within bounds, and preserve what they have gained for their posterity. Others fond of showing their wealth will be extravagant and ruin themselves. Laws cannot prevent this, and perhaps it is not always an evil to the public. A shilling spent idly by a fool, may be picked up by a wiser person, who knows better what to do with it: it is therefore not lost. A vain, silly fellow builds a fine house, furnishes it richly, lives in it expensively, and in a few years ruins himself; but the masons, carpenters, smiths, and other honest tradesmen, have been by his employ assisted in maintaining and raising their families; the farmer has been paid for his labor and encouraged, and the estate is now in better hands. In some cases indeed, certain modes of luxury may be a public evil, in the same manner as it is a private one. If there

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be a nation, for instance, that exports its beef and linen to pay for its importations of claret and porter, while a great part of its people live upon potatoes, and wear no shirts, wherein does it differ from the sot who lets his family starve, and sells his clothes to buy drink? Our American commerce is, I confess, a little in this way. We sell our victuals to your islands for rum and sugar; the substantial necessaries of life for superfluities. But we have plenty and live well nevertheless; though by being soberer we might be richer. By-the-by, here is just issued an *arrêt* of council, taking off all the duties upon the exportation of brandies, which, it is said, will render them cheaper in America than your rum; in which case there is no doubt but they will be preferred, and we shall be better able to bear your restrictions on our commerce. There are views here, by augmenting their settlements, of being able to supply the growing people of America with the sugar that may be wanted there. On the whole, I believe England will get as little by the commercial war she has begun with us, as she did by the military. But to return to luxury.

The vast quantity of forest lands we have yet to clear and put in order for cultivation, will for a long time keep the body of our nation laborious and frugal. Forming an opinion of our people and their manners, by what is seen among the inhabitants of the sea-ports, is judging from an improper sample. The people of the trading towns may be rich and luxurious, while the country possesses all the virtues that tend to private happiness and public prosperity. Those towns are not much regarded by the country; they are hardly considered as an essential part of the States. And the experience of the last war has shewn, that their being in possession of the enemy did not necessarily draw on the subjection of the country, which bravely continued to maintain its freedom and independence notwithstanding.

It has been computed by some political arithmetician, that if every man and woman would work four hours each day in something useful, that labor would produce sufficient to procure all the necessaries and comforts of life; want and misery

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would be banished out of the world, and the rest of the twenty-four hours might be leisure and pleasure.

What then occasions so much want and misery? It is the employment of men and women in works that produce neither the necessaries nor conveniences of life; who, with those who do nothing, consume the necessaries raised by the laborious. To explain this,

The first elements of wealth are obtained by labor from the earth and waters. I have land, and raise corn; with this I feed a family that does nothing, my corn will be consumed, and at the end of the year I shall be no richer than I was at the beginning. But if, while I feed them, I employ them, some in spinning, others in hewing timber and sawing boards, others in making bricks, &c. for building; the value of my corn will be arrested, and remain with me, and at the end of the year we may all be better clothed and better lodged. And if instead of employing a man I feed, in making bricks, I employ him in fiddling for me, the corn he eats is gone, and no part of his manufacture remains to augment the wealth and the conveniences of the family; I shall therefore be the poorer for this fiddling man, unless the rest of my family work more or eat less to make up the deficiency he occasions.

Look round the world and see the millions employed in doing nothing, or in something that amounts to nothing, when the necessaries and conveniences of life are in question. What is the bulk of commerce for which we fight and destroy each other, but the toil of millions for superfluities, to the great hazard and loss of many lives by the constant dangers of the sea? How much labor spent in building and fitting great ships to go to China and Arabia for tea and for coffee; to the West Indies for sugar, to America for tobacco! These things cannot be called the necessaries of life, for our ancestors lived very comfortably without them.

A question may be asked, could all these people now employed in raising, making, or carrying superfluities, be subsisted by raising necessaries? I think they might. The world

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is large, and a great part of it still uncultivated. Many hundred millions of acres in Asia, Africa, and America, are still forest, and a great deal even in Europe. On 100 acres of this forest, a man might become a substantial farmer, and 100,000 men employed in clearing each his 100 acres, (instead of being as they are, French hair-dressers) would hardly brighten a spot big enough to be visible from the moon, (unless with Herschell's telescope,) so vast are the regions still in the world unimproved.

'Tis however some comfort to reflect, that upon the whole the quantity of industry and prudence among mankind, exceeds the quantity of idleness and folly. Hence the increase of good buildings, farms cultivated, and populous cities filled with wealth all over Europe, which a few ages since were only to be found on the coasts of the Mediterranean. And this, notwithstanding the mad wars continually raging, by which are often destroyed in one year the works of many years' peace. So that we may hope the luxury of a few merchants on the sea-coast will not be the ruin of America.

One reflection more and I will end this long rambling letter. Almost all the parts of our bodies require some expense. The feet demand shoes, the legs stockings, the rest of the body clothing, and the belly a good deal of victuals. *Our* eyes, though exceedingly useful, ask when reasonable only the cheap assistance of *spectacles,* which could not much impair our finances. But THE EYES OF OTHER PEOPLE are the eyes that ruin us. If all but myself were blind, I should want neither fine clothes, fine houses, nor fine furniture.

Adieu, my dear friend. I am, yours ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. This will be delivered to you by my grandson. I am persuaded you will afford him your civilities and counsels. Please to accept a little present of books, I send by him, curious for the beauty of the impression.

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To the Right Honorable Lord Viscount Howe.

Passy, August 18, 1784.

My Lord,

I RECEIVED lately the very valuable voyage of the late captain Cook, kindly sent to me by your lordship, in consideration of my good will in issuing orders towards the protection of that illustrious discoverer from any interruption in his return home by American cruisers. The reward vastly exceeds the small merit of the action, which was no more than a duty to mankind. I am very sensible of his majesty's goodness in permitting this favor to me, and I desire that my thankful acknowledgments may be accepted.

With great respect, I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Price.

Passy, August 16, 1784.

Dear Friend,

I SOME time since answered your kind letter of July 12, returning the proof of Mr. Turgot's letter, with the permission of his friends to print it. I hope it came safe to hand.

I had before received yours of April, which gave me great pleasure, as it acquainted me with your welfare, and that of Dr. Priestley.

The commencement here of the art of flying, will, as you observe, be a new epoch. The construction and manner of filling the balloons improve daily. Some of the artists have lately gone to England. It will be well for your philosophers to obtain from them what they know, or you will be behind hand; which in mechanic operations is unusual for Englishmen.

I hope the disagreements in our Royal Society are composed: quarrels often disgrace both sides; and disputes even on small matters often produce quarrels, for want of know-

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ing how to differ decently: an art which 'tis said scarce any body possesses but yourself and Dr. Priestley.

I had indeed thoughts of visiting England once more, and of enjoying the great pleasure of seeing again my friends there; but my malady otherwise tolerable, is I find irritated by the motion in a carriage, and I fear the consequence of such a journey; yet I am not quite resolved against it. I often think of the agreeable evenings I used to pass with that excellent collection of good men, the club at the London, and wish to be again among them. Perhaps I may pop in some Thursday evening when they least expect me. You may well believe it very pleasing to me to have Dr. Priestley associated with me among the foreign members of the Academy of Sciences. I had mentioned him upon every vacancy that has happened since my residence here, and the place has never been bestowed more worthily.

When you wrote the letter I am now answering, your nation was involved in the confusion of your new election. When I think of your present crazy constitution and its diseases, I imagine the enormous emoluments of place to be among the greatest, and while they exist I doubt whether ever the reform of your representation will cure the evils constantly arising from your perpetual factions. As it seems to be a settled point at present that the minister must govern the parliament, who are to do every thing he would have done; and he is to bribe them to do this, and the people are to furnish the money to pay these bribes. The parliament appears to me a very expensive machine for government, and I apprehend the people will find out in time that they may as well be governed, and that it will be much cheaper to be governed by the minister alone; no parliament being preferable to the present.

Your newspapers are full of fictitious accounts of distractions in America. We know nothing of them. Mr. Jefferson, just arrived here, after a journey through all the states from Virginia to Boston, assures me that all is quiet, a general tranquillity reigns, and the people well satisfied with their

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present forms of government, a few insignificant persons only excepted. These accounts are I suppose intended as consolatory, and to discourage emigrations. I think with you, that our revolution is an important event for the advantange of mankind in general. It is to be hoped that the lights we enjoy, which the ancient governments in their first establishment could not have, may preserve us from their errors. In this the advice of wise friends may do much good, and I am sure that which you have been so kind as to offer us will be of great service.

Mr. Jay is gone to America; but Mr. Adams is just arrived here, and I shall acquaint him with your remembrance of him.

Many thanks for your kind wishes respecting my health and happiness, which I return fourfold, being ever with the sincerest esteem, my dear friend, your most affectionate

B. FRANKLIN.

To William Strahan, Esq., M. P., King's Printer, London.

Passy, Aug. 19, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of April 17. You will have the goodness to place my delay in answering, to the account of indisposition and business, and excuse it. I have now that letter before me; and my grandson, whom you may formerly remember a little scholar at Mr. Elphinston's, purposing to set out in a day or two on a visit to his father in London, I sit down to scribble a little to you, first recommending him as a worthy young man to your civilities and counsels.

You press me much to come to England. I am not without strong inducements to do so; the fund of knowledge you promise to communicate to me is in addition to them, no small one. At present it is impracticable. But when my grandson returns, come with him. We will talk the matter over, and perhaps you may take me back with you. I have a bed at

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your service, and will try to make your residence, while you can stay with us, as agreeable to you, if possible, as I am sure it will be to me.

You do not "approve the annihilation of profitable places; for you do not see why a statesman who does his business well, should not be paid for his labor as well as any other workman." Agreed. But why more than any other workman? The less the salary the greater the honor. In so great a nation there are many rich enough to afford giving their time to the public; and there are I make no doubt many wise and able men who would take as much pleasure in governing for nothing, as they do in playing of chess for nothing. It would be one of the noblest amusements. That this opinion is not chimerical, the country I now live in affords a proof; its whole civil and criminal law administration being done for nothing, or in some sense for less than nothing, since the members of its judiciary parliaments buy their places, and do not make more than three per cent, for their money, by their fees and emoluments, while the legal interest is five; so that in fact they give two per cent to be allowed to govern, and all their time and trouble into the bargain. Thus *profit*, one motive for desiring place, being abolished, there remains only *ambition*; and that being in some degree balanced by *loss*, you may easily conceive that there will not be very violent factions and contentions for such places; nor much of the mischief to the country that attends your factions, which have often occasioned wars, and overloaded you with debts unpayable.

I allow you all the force of your joke upon the vagrancy of our congress. They have a right to sit *where* they please, of which perhaps they have made too much use by shifting too often.—But they have two other rights; those of sitting *when* they please, and as *long* as they please, in which methinks they have the advantage of your parliament; for they cannot be dissolved by the breath of a minister, or sent packing as you were the other day, when it was your earnest desire to have remained longer together.

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You "fairly acknowledge that the late war terminated quite contrary to your expectation." Your expectation was ill-founded; for you would not believe your old friend, who told you repeatedly that by those measures, England would lose her colonies, as Epictetus warned in vain his master, that he would break his leg. You believed rather the tales you heard of our poltroonery and impotence of body and mind. Do you not remember the story you told me of the Scotch serjeant who met with a party of forty American soldiers, and though alone disarmed them all, and brought them in prisoners? a story almost as improbable as that of an Irishman, who pretended to have alone taken and brought in five of the enemy by *surrounding* them. And yet, my friend, sensible and judicious as you are, but partaking of the general infatuation, you seemed to believe it. The word *general* puts me in mind of a general, your general Clarke, who had the folly to say in my hearing, at sir John Pringle's, that with a thousand British grenadiers, he would undertake to go from one end of America to the other, and geld all the males, partly by force and partly by a little coaxing. It is plain he took us for a species of animals very little superior to brutes. The parliament too believed the stories of another foolish general, I forgot his name, that the Yankees never *felt bold.* Yankey was understood to be a sort of Yahoo, and the parliament did not think the petitions of such creatures were fit to be received and read in so wise an assembly. What was the consequence of this monstrous pride and insolence? You first sent small armies to subdue us, believing them more than sufficient, but soon found yourselves obliged to send greater; these whenever they ventured to penetrate our country beyond the protection of their ships, were either repulsed and obliged to scamper out, or were surrounded, beaten, and taken prisoners. An American planter who had never seen Europe, was chosen by us to command our troops, and continued during the whole war. This man sent home to you, one after another, five of your best generals baf-

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fled, their heads bare of laurels, disgraced even in the opinion of their employers. Your contempt of our understandings, in comparison with your own, appeared to be much better founded than that of our courage, if we may judge by this circumstance that in whatever court of Europe a Yankey negociator appeared, the wise British minister was routed, put in a passion, picked a quarrel with your friends, and was sent home with a flea in his ear. But after all, my dear friend, do not imagine that I am vain enough to ascribe our success to any superiority in any of those points. I am too well acquainted with all the springs and levers of our machine, not to see, that our human means were unequal to our undertaking, and that if it had not been for the justice of our cause, and the consequent interposition of Providence, in which we had faith, we must have been ruined. If I had ever before been an Atheist, I should now have been convinced of the Being and government of a Deity! It is he that abases the proud and favors the humble. May we never forget his goodness to us, and may our future conduct manifest our gratitude.

But let us leave these serious reflections, and converse with our usual pleasantry. I remember your observing once to me, as we sat together in the House of Commons, that no two journeymen printers within your knowledge, had met with such success in the world as ourselves. You were then at the head of your profession, and soon afterwards became a member of parliament. I was an agent for a few provinces and now act for them all. But we have risen by different modes. I as a republican printer, always liked a form well *plained down;* being averse to those *overbearing* letters that hold their heads so *high* as to hinder their neighbors from appearing. You as a monarchist chose to work upon *crown* paper and found it profitable; while I worked upon *pro patria* (often indeed called *fools-cap*) with no less advantage. Both our *heaps hold out* very well, and we seem likely to make a pretty good *day's work* of it. With regard to public affairs, (to continue in the same stile) it seems to me that your *compositors* in your *chapel* do not *cast off their copy well,* nor perfectly understand

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imposing: their *forms* too are continually pestered by the *outs* and *doubles* that are not easy to be *corrected.* And I think they were wrong in laying aside some *faces,* and particularly certain *head-pieces,* that would have been both useful and ornamental. But, courage! The business may still flourish with good management; and the master become as rich as any of the company.

By the way, the rapid growth and extension of the English language in America, must become greatly advantageous to the booksellers, and holders of copy-rights in England. A vast audience is assembling there for English authors, ancient, present, and future, our people doubling every twenty years; and this will demand large and of course profitable impressions of your most valuable books. I would therefore, if I possessed such rights, entail them, if such a thing be practicable, upon my posterity for their worth will be continually augmenting. This may look a little like advice, and yet I have drank no *Madeira* these six months. The subject however leads me to another thought which is, that you do wrong to discourage the emigration of Englishmen to America. In my piece on population, I have proved I think, that emigration does not diminish but multiplies a nation. You will not have the fewer at home for those that go abroad; and as every man who comes among us and takes up a piece of land, becomes a citizen, and by our constitution has a voice in elections, and a share in the government of the country, why should you be against acquiring by this fair means a repossession of it, and leave it to be taken by foreigners of all nations and languages, who by their numbers may drown and stifle the English, which otherwise would probably become in the course of two centuries the most extensive language in the world, the Spanish only excepted? It is a fact, that the Irish emigrants and their children are now in possession of the government of Pennsylvania, by their majority in the assembly, as well as of a great part of the territory; and I remember well the first ship that brought any of them over.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To George Wheatley, Esq.

Passy, near Paris, Aug. 21, 1784.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of May 3—83. I am ashamed it has been so long unanswered. The indolence of old age, frequent indisposition and too much business, are my only excuses. I had great pleasure in reading it, as it informed me of your welfare.

Your excellent little work, *The Principles of Trade*, is too little known. I wish you would send me a copy of it by the return of my grandson and secretary, whom I beg leave to recommend to your civilities. I would get it translated and printed here. And if your bookseller has any quantity of them left, I should be glad he would send them to America. The ideas of our people there, though rather better than those that prevail in Europe, are not so good as they should be; and that piece might be of service among them.

Since and soon after the date of your letter, we lost unaccountably as well as unfortunately that worthy valuable young man you mention, your namesake, Madison. He was infinitely regretted by all that knew him.

I am sorry your favorite charity[n] does not go on as you could wish it. It is shrunk indeed by your admitting only 60 children in a year. What you have told your brethren respecting America is true. If you find it difficult to dispose of your children in England, it looks as if you had too many people. And yet you are afraid of emigration. A subscription is lately set on foot here to encourage and assist mothers in nursing their infants themselves at home; the practice of sending them to the *Enfants trouvés* having risen here to a monstrous excess, as by the annual bill it appears they amount to near one-third of the children born in Paris! The subscription is likely to succeed and may do a great deal of good, though it cannot answer all the purposes of a foundling hospital.

[n] The Foundling Hospital.

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Your eyes must continue very good, since you can write so small a hand without spectacles. I cannot distinguish a letter even of large print; but am happy in the invention of double spectacles,[r] which serving for distant objects as well as near ones, make my eyes as useful to me as ever they were. If all the other defects and infirmities were as easily and cheaply remedied, it would be worth while for friends to live a good deal longer, but I look upon death to be as necessary to our constitution as sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the morning.

Adieu, and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To * * *.

Passy, August 21, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

UNDERSTANDING that my letter intended for you, by general Melvill, was lost at the hotel D'Espagne, I take this opportunity by my grandson, to give you the purport of it, as well as I can recollect. I thanked you for the pleasure you had procured me of the general's conversation, whom I found a judicious, sensible, and amiable man. I was glad to hear that you possessed a comfortable retirement, and more so, that you had thoughts of removing to Philadelphia, for that it would make me very happy to have you there. Your *companions* would be very acceptable to the library, but I hoped you would long live to enjoy their company yourself. I agreed with you in sentiments concerning the old testament, and thought the clause in our constitutions, which required the members of assembly to declare their belief *the whole of it was given by divine inspiration,* had better been omitted. That I had opposed the clause; but being overpowered by numbers, and fearing more might in future times be grafted on it, I prevailed to have the additional clause, "that *no further or more extended profession of faith*

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[r] See letter to George Wheatley, Esq., dated Passy, May 23, 1785.

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should ever be exacted." I observed to you too, that the evil of it was the less, as *no inhabitant*, nor any officer of government, except the members of assembly, was obliged to make that declaration. So much for that letter: to which I may now add, that there are several things in the old testament, impossible to be given by *divine* inspiration; such as the approbation ascribed to the angel of the lord, of that abominably wicked and detestable action of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite. If the rest of the book were like that, I should rather suppose it given by inspiration from another quarter, and renounce the whole.

By the way, how goes on the Unitarian church in Essex street? and the honest minister of it,[w] is he comfortably supported? your old colleague Mr. Radcliffe,[x] is he living? and what became of Mr. Denham?

My grandson, who will have the honor of delivering this to you, may bring me a line from you; and I hope will bring me an account of your continuing well and happy.

I jog on still, with as much health, and as few of the infirmities of old age as I have any reason to expect. But notwithstanding the decay of my constitution, my regard for my old friends remains firm and entire. You will always have a good share of it, for I am ever with great and sincere esteem, dear sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To B. Vaughan, Esq.

Passy, Sept. 7, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THIS will be delivered to you by count Mirabeau; son of the marquis of that name, author of *L'Ami des Hommes*. This gentleman is esteemed here, and I recommend him to

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[w] Theophilus Lindsey, M. A.

[x] A dissenting minister at Wapping, who afterwards turned to the profession of the law. He published one or two sermons.

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your civilities and counsels, particularly with respect to the printing of a piece he has written on the subject of *hereditary nobility*, on occasion of the order of Cincinnati, lately attempted to be established in America, which cannot be printed here. I find that some of the best judges think it extremely well written, with great clearness, force, and elegance. If you can recommend him to an honest reasonable bookseller, that will undertake it, you will do him service, and perhaps some to mankind, who are too much bigotted in many countries to that kind of imposition.—I had formerly almost resolved to trouble you with no more letters of recommendation: but I think you will find this gentleman to possess talents, that may render his acquaintance agreeable.

With sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

Passy, April 21, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your kind letter to the 23d past, by Mr. Perry, with the other bottle of Blackrie. I thank you much for your care in sending them. I should have been glad to be of any use to Mr. Perry; but he had placed his children before I saw him, and he staid with me only a few minutes.

We see much in parliamentary proceedings, and in papers and pamphlets, of the injury the concessions to Ireland will do to the *manufacturers* of England, while the *people* of England seem to be forgotten, as if quite out of the question. If the *Irish can manufacture cottons*, and *stuffs*, and *silks*, and *linens*, and *cutlery*, and *toys*, and *books*, &c. &c. &c., so as to sell them cheaper in England than the *manufacturers* of England sell them, is not this good for the *people* of England who are not manufacturers? And will not even the manufacturers themselves share the benefit? Since if cottons are cheaper, all the other manufacturers who wear cottons will save in that article; and so of the rest. If books can be had much

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cheaper from Ireland, (which I believe, for I bought Blackstone there for 24*s.* when it was sold in England at four guineas) is not this an advantage, not to English booksellers indeed, but to English readers, and to learning? And of all the complainants, perhaps these booksellers are least worthy of consideration. The catalogue you last sent me amazes me by the high prices (said to be the lowest) affixed to each article. And one can scarce see a new book, without observing the excessive artifices made use of to puff up a paper of verses into a pamphlet, a pamphlet into an octavo, and an octavo into a quarto, with scab-boardings, white lines, sparse titles of chapters, and exorbitant margins, to such a degree, that the selling of paper seems now the object, and printing on it only the pretence. I inclose the copy of a page in a late comedy. Between every two lines there is a white space equal to another line. You have a law, I think, against butchers blowing of veal to make it look fatter; why not one against booksellers' blowing of books to make them look bigger. All this *to yourself;* you can easily guess the reason.

My grandson is a little indisposed, but sends you two pamphlets, *Figaro*, and *Le Roy Voyageur*. The first is a play of Beaumarchais, which has had a great run here. The other a representation of all the supposed errors of government in this country, some of which are probably exaggerated. It is not publicly sold; we shall send some more shortly.

Please to remember me very respectfully and affectionately to good Dr. Price. I am glad that he has printed a translation of the Testament, it may do good.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

[Inclosed in the foregoing Letter.]

SCENE IV.

Sir JOHN and WILDMORE.

Sir JOHN.

Whither so fast?

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WILDMORE.

To the Opera.

Sir JOHN.

It is not the ———?

WILDMORE.

Yes it is.

Sir JOHN.

Never on a Sunday.

WILDMORE.

Is this Sunday?

Sir JOHN.

Yes sure.

WILDMORE.

I remember nothing; I shall soon forget my Christian name.

If this page was printed running on like Erasmus's Colloquies, it would not have made more than five lines.

From Dr. Franklin to an Engraver in Paris.

Passy.

EN relisant, monsieur, le prospectus de votre éstampe, je vois que vous m'attribuez toujours en entier le mérite d'avoir affranchi l'Amerique. J'ay cependant eu l'honneur de vous dire, dans notre premiere conversation, que je ne pouvois y consentir sans me rendre coupable d'injustice envers tant d'hommes sages et courageux qui n'ont pas craint de hazarder leur fortune et leur vie pour le succès de cette entreprise; je vous proposai donc, et je persiste dans la même pensée, de

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substituer à mon nom dans l'implication de l'estampe, ces mots: *" le congrès représenté par un senateur habillé à la romaine, &c."*

Je ne puis non plus, monsieur, en accepter la dédicace: je ne veux point que la France, et mon pays me croyent assez presompteux pour convenir que je merite des louanges aussi excessives; et vous concevex qu'il me siéroit mal d'appuyer de ma recommendation le debit d'un ouvrage qui les contiendroit. D'aprés ces considérations je vous prie de vouloir bien changer votre explication dans un nouveau prospectus, et de dedier votre estampe au Congrès. J'ai l'honneur d'être, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Ingenhousz.

Passy, April 29, 1785.

I THANK you much for the postscript respecting my disorder, the stone. I have taken heretofore, and am now again taking, the remedy you mention, which is called *Blackrie's Solvent.* It is the soap lye, with lime water, and I believe it may have some effect in diminishing the symptoms, and preventing the growth of the stone, which is all I expect from it. It does not hurt my appetite, I sleep well, and enjoy my friends in cheerful conversation as usual. But as I cannot use much exercise, I eat more sparingly than formerly, and I drink no wine.

I admire that you should be so timid in asking leave of your good imperial master, to make a journey for visiting a friend. I am persuaded you would succeed, and I hope the proposition I have repeated to you in this letter will assist your courage, and enable you to ask and obtain. If you come hither soon, you may when present, get your book finished, and be ready to proceed with me to America. While writing this, I have received from congress my leave to return; and I believe I shall be ready to embark by the middle of July at farthest. I shall now be free from politics for the rest of my life. Welcome again my dear philosophical amusements!

I see by a full page of your letter, you have been possess-

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ed with strange ideas of America, that there is no justice to be obtained there, no recovery of debts, projects of insurrection to overturn the present government, &c. &c. that a Virginia colonel, nephew of the governor, had cheated a stranger of 100,000 livres, and that somebody was imprisoned for only speaking of it; and the like very improbable stories; they are all fictions or misrepresentations. If they were truths, all strangers would avoid such a country, and foreign merchants would as soon carry their goods to sell in Newgate as America. Think a little on the sums England has spent to preserve a monopoly of the trade of that people, with whom they had long been acquainted; and of the desire all Europe is now manifesting to obtain a share of that trade. Our ports are full of their ships, their merchants buying and selling in our streets continually, and returning with our products. Would this happen? Could such commerce be continued with us, if we were such a collection of scoundrels and villains as we have been represented to you? And insurrections against our rulers are not only unlikely, as the rulers are the choice of the people, but unnecessary; as if not liked they may be changed annually by the new elections. I own you have cause, great cause to complain of * * *, but you are wrong to condemn a whole country by a single sample. I have seen many countries, and I do not know a country in the world in which justice is so well administered, where protection and favor have so little power to impede its operations, and where debts are recovered with so much facility. If I thought it such a country as it has been painted to you, I should certainly never return to it. The truth, I believe, is, that more goods have been carried thither from all parts of Europe, than the consumption of the country requires, and it is natural that some of the adventurers are willing to discourage others from following them, lest the prices should still be kept down by the arrival of fresh cargoes; and it is not unlikely that some negligent or unfaithful factors sent thither, may have given such accounts to excuse their not making remittances. And the English magnify all this, and

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spread it abroad in their papers, to dissuade foreigners from attempting to interfere with them in their commerce with us.

Your account of the emperor's condescending conversation with you concerning me, is pleasing. I respect very much the character of that monarch, and think that if I were one of his subjects, he would find me a good one. I am glad that his difference with your country is likely to be accommodated without bloodshed. The Courier de l'Europe, and some other papers, printed a letter on that difference, which they ascribed to me. Be assured, my friend, that I never wrote it, nor was ever presumptuous enough to meddle with an affair so much out of my way. Yours &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Jonathan Williams.

Passy, May 19, 1785.

THE conversations you mention respecting America are suitable. Those people speak what they wish; but she was certainly never in a more happy situation. They are angry with us, and speak all manner of evil of us; but we flourish notwithstanding. They put me in mind of a violent high church-factor, resident in Boston, when I was a boy. He had bought upon speculation a Connecticut cargo of onions, which he flattered himself he might sell again to great profit, but the price fell, and they lay upon hand. He was heartily vexed with his bargain, especially when he observed they began to *grow* in the store he had filled with them. He showed them one day to a friend. Here they are, says he, and they are *growing* too! I damn them every day; but I think they are like the presbyterians—the more I curse them, the more they grow. Yours, B. FRANKLIN.

To George Wheatley, Esq.

Passy, May 19, 1785.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I RECEIVED the very good letter you sent me by my grandson, together with your resemblance, which is placed

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in my chamber, and gives me great pleasure. There is no trade, they say, without returns, and therefore I am punctual in making those you have ordered.

I intended this should have been a long epistle, but I am interrupted, and can only add, that I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To George Wheatley, Esq.

Passy, May 23, 1785.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I SENT you a few lines the other day, with the medallion, when I should have written more, but was prevented by the coming in of a *bavard*, who worried me till evening. I bore with him, and now you are to bear with me: for I shall probably *bavarder* in answering your letter.

I am not acquainted with the saying of Alphonsus, which you allude to as a sanctification of your rigidity in refusing to allow me the plea of old age, as an excuse for my want of exactness in correspondence. What was that saying? You do not it seems feel any occasion for such an excuse, though you are, as you say, rising 75. But I am rising (perhaps more properly falling) 80, and I leave the excuse with you till you arrive at that age; perhaps you may then be more sensible of its validity, and see fit to use it for yourself.

I must agree with you that the gout is bad, and that the stone is worse. I am happy in not having them both together, and I join in your prayer, that you may live till you die without either. But I doubt the author of the epitaph you send me was a little mistaken, when he, speaking of the world, says that

> ——————— *he ne'er cared a pin*
> *What they said or may say of the mortal within.*

It is so natural to wish to be well spoken of, whether alive or dead, that I imagine he could not be quite exempt from that desire; and that at least he wished to be thought a wit, or he would not have given himself the trouble of writing so good

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an epitaph to leave behind him. Was it not as worthy of his care that the world should say he was an honest and a good man? I like better the concluding sentiment in the old song, called the *Old Man's Wish*, wherein, after wishing for a warm house in a country town, an easy horse, some good authors, ingenious and cheerful companions, a pudding on Sundays, with stout ale, and a bottle of Burgundy, &c. &c., in separate stanzas, each ending with this burthen,

May I govern my passions with absolute sway,
Grow wiser and better as my strength wears away,
Without gout or stone, by a gentle decay.

He adds,

With a courage undaunted may I face my last day;
And when I am gone, may the better sort say;
In the morning when sober, in the evening when mellow,
He 's gone, and has not left behind him his fellow.
For he governed his passions, &c.

But what signifies our wishing? Things happen, after all, as they will happen. I have sung that *wishing song* a thousand times when I was young, and now find at fourscore that the three contraries have befallen me, being subject to the gout, and the stone, and not being yet master of all my passions. Like the proud girl in my country, who wished and resolved not to marry a parson, nor a presbyterian, nor an Irishman, and at length found herself married to an Irish presbyterian parson. You see I have some reason to wish that in a future state, I may not only be *as well as I was*, but a little better. And I hope it: for I too, with your poet, *trust in God*. And when I observe that there is great frugality as well as wisdom in his works, since he has been evidently sparing both of labor and materials; for by the various wonderful inventions of propagation, he has provided for the continual peopling his world with plants and animals, without being at the trouble of repeated new creations; and by the natural reduction of compound substances to their original elements, capable of being employed in new compositions, he has prevented the necessity of creating new matter; for that the earth, water, air, and perhaps fire, which being compounded from wood, do when the wood is dissolved return, and again be-

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come air, earth, fire, and water; I say, that when I see nothing annihilated, and not even a drop of water wasted, I cannot suspect the annihilation of souls, or believe that he will suffer the daily waste of millions of minds ready made, that now exist, and put himself to the continual trouble of making new ones. Thus finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall in some shape or other always exist: and with all the inconveniences human life is liable to, I shall not object to a new edition of mine; hoping however that the errata of the last may be corrected.

I return your note of children received in the foundling hospital at Paris, from 1741 to 1755 inclusive; and I have added the years succeeding down to 1770. Those since that period, I have not been able to obtain. I have noted in the margin the gradual increase, viz. from every tenth child so thrown upon the public, till it comes to every third! Fifteen years have passed since the last account, and probably it may now amount to one-half. Is it right to encourage this monstrous deficiency of natural affection? A surgeon I met with here excused the women of Paris, by saying seriously that they *could not* give suck, "*Car,*" said he, "*ils n'ont point de tetons.*" He assured me it was a fact, and bade me look at them, and observe how flat they were on the breast; they have nothing more there, said he, than I have upon the back of my hand. I have since thought that there might be some truth in his observation, and that possibly, nature, finding they made no use of bubbies, has left off giving them any. Yet, since Rousseau pleaded with admirable eloquence for the rights of children to their mother's milk, the mode has changed a little; and some ladies of quality now suckle their infants and find milk enough. May the mode descend to the lower ranks, till it becomes no longer the custom to pack their infants away as soon as born, to the *enfans trouvés,* with the careless observation, that the king is better able to maintain them. I am credibly informed that nine-tenths of them die there pretty soon, which is said to be a great relief to the institution, whose funds would not otherwise be sufficient to

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bring up the remainder. Except the few persons of quality above-mentioned, and the multitude who send to the hospital, the practice is to hire nurses in the country to carry out the children, and take care of them there. Here is an office for examining the health of nurses, and giving them licenses. They come to town on certain days of the week in companies to receive the children, and we often meet trains of them on the road returning to the neighboring villages, with each a child in arms. But those who are good enough to try this way of raising their children, are often not able to pay the expense, so that the prisons of Paris are crowded with wretched fathers and mothers confined *pour mois de nourrice*, though it is laudably a favorite charity to pay for them, and set such prisoners at liberty. I wish success to the new project of assisting the poor to keep their children at home, because I think there is no nurse like a mother, (or not many) and that if parents did not immediately send their infants out of their sight, they would in a few days begin to love them, and thence be spurred to greater industry for their maintenance. This is a subject you understand better than I, and therefore, having perhaps said too much, I drop it. I only add to the notes a remark from the History of the Academy of Sciences, much in favor of the foundling institution.

The Philadelphia bank goes on, as I hear, very well. What you call the Cincinnati institution, is no institution of our government, but a private convention among the officers of our late army, and so universally disliked by the people, that it is supposed it will be dropped. It was considered as an attempt to establish something like an hereditary rank or nobility. I hold with you that it was wrong; may I add, that all descending honors are wrong and absurd; that the honors of virtuous actions appertain only to him that performs them, and is in its nature incommunicable. If it were communicable by descent, it must also be divisible among the descendants; and the more ancient the family, the less would be found existing in any one branch of it; to say nothing of the greater chance of unlucky interruptions.

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Our constitution seems not to be well understood with you. If the congress were a permanent body, there would be more reason in being jealous of giving it powers. But its members are chosen annually, cannot be chosen more than three years successively, nor more than three years in seven; and any of them may be recalled at any time, whenever their constituents shall be dissatisfied with their conduct. They are of the people, and return again to mix with the people, having no more durable pre-eminence than the different grains of sand in an hour glass. Such an assembly cannot easily become dangerous to liberty. They are the servants of the people, sent together to do the people's business, and promote the public welfare; their powers must be sufficient or their duties cannot be performed. They have no profitable appointments, but a mere payment of daily wages, such as are scarcely equivalent to their expenses; so that having no chance for great places and enormous salaries or pensions, as in some countries, there is no canvassing or bribing for elections. I wish Old England were as happy in its government, but I do not see it. Your people, however, think their constitution the best in the world, and affect to despise ours. It is comfortable to have a good opinion of oneself, and of every thing that belongs to us; to think one's own religion, king, and wife, the best of all possible wives, kings, or religions. I remember three Greenlanders, who had travelled two years in Europe, under the care of some Moravian missionaries, and had visited Germany, Denmark, Holland, and England; when I asked them at Philadelphia (where they were in their way home) whether, now they had seen how much more commodiously the white people lived by the help of the arts, they would not choose to remain among us? their answer was, that they were pleased with having had an opportunity of seeing so many fine things, *but they chose to* LIVE *in their own country.* Which country, by the way, consisted of rock only; for the Moravians were obliged to carry earth in their ship from New York, for the purpose of making a cabbage garden.

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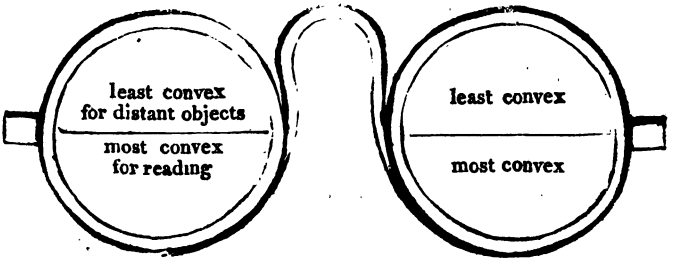
By Mr. Dollond's saying that my double spectacles can only serve particular eyes, I doubt he has not been rightly informed of their construction. I imagine it will be found pretty generally true, that the same convexity of glass through which a man sees clearest and best at the distance proper for reading, is not the best for greater distances. I therefore had formerly two pair of spectacles, which I shifted occasionally, as in travelling I sometimes read and often wanted to regard the prospects. Finding this change troublesome and not always sufficiently ready, I had the glasses cut, and half of each kind associated in the same circle, thus,



By this means, as I wear my spectacles constantly, I have only to move my eyes up or down as I want to see distinctly far or near, the proper glasses being always ready. This I find more particularly convenient since my being in France, the glasses that serve me best at table to see what I eat, not being the best to see the faces of those on the other side of the table who speak to me; and when one's ears are not well accustomed to the sounds of a language, a sight of the movements in the features of him that speaks helps to explain; so that I understand French better by the help of my spectacles.

My intended translator of your piece, the only one I know who understands the *subject* as well as the two languages, (which a translator ought to do, or he cannot make so good a translation,) is at present occupied in an affair that prevents his undertaking it; but that will soon be over. I thank you for the notes. I should be glad to have another of the printed pamphlets.

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We shall always be ready to take your children if you send them to us. I only wonder, that since London draws to itself and consumes such numbers of your country people, the country should not, to supply their places, want and willingly receive the children you have to dispose of. That circumstance, together with the multitude who voluntarily part with their freedom as men, to serve for a time as lacqueys, or for life as soldiers, in consideration of small wages, seems to me proof, that your island is over-peopled. And yet it is afraid of emigrations!

Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever, yours very affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To * * *.

Passy, June 20, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just received the only letter from you that has given me pain. It informs me of your intention to attempt passing to England in the car of a balloon. In the present imperfect state of that invention, I think it much too soon to hazard a voyage of that distance. It is said here by some of those who have had experience, that as yet they have not found means to keep up a balloon more than two hours; for that by now and then losing air to prevent rising too high and bursting; and now and then discharging ballast to avoid descending too low; these means of regulation are exhausted. Besides this all the circumstances of danger by disappointment, in the operation of *Soupape's* &c. &c. seem not to be yet well known, and therefore not easily provided against. For on Wednesday last M. Pilatre de Rosier, who had studied the subject as much as any man, lost his support in the air by the bursting of his balloon, or by some other means we are yet unacquainted with, and fell with his companion from the hight of one thousand toises on the rocky coast, and was found dashed to pieces. You having lived a good

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life do not fear death. But pardon the anxious freedom of a friend, if he tells you the continuance of your life being of importance to your family and your country, though you might laudably hazard it for their good, you have no right to risque it for a fancy. I pray God this may reach you in time, and have some effect towards changing your design:

Being ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Baron Maseres.

Passy, June 26, 1785.

SIR,

I HAVE just received your friendly letter of the 20th instant. I agree with you perfectly in the opinon, that though the contest has been hurtful to both our countries, yet the event, a separation, is better even for yours than success. The reducing and keeping us in subjection by an armed force, would have cost you more than the dominion could be worth, and our slavery would have brought on yours. The ancient system of the British empire was a happy one, by which the colonies were allowed to govern and tax themselves. Had it been wisely continued, it is hard to imagine the degree of power and importance in the world that empire might have arrived at. All the means of growing greatness, extent of territory, agriculture, commerce, arts, population, were within its own limits, and therefore at its command. I used to consider that system as a large and beautiful porcelain vase, I lamented the measures that I saw likely to break it, and strove to prevent them; because once broken I saw no probability of its being ever repaired. My endeavours did not succeed: we are broken, and the parts must now do as well as they can for themselves. We may still do well, though separated. I have great hopes of our side, and good wishes for yours. The anarchy and confusion you mention, as supposed to prevail among us, exist only in your newspapers. I have authentic accounts, which assure me that no people were

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ever better governed, or more content with their respective constitutions and governments than the present thirteen states of America. A little reflection may convince any reasonable man, that a government wherein the administrators are chosen annually, by the free voice of the governed, and may also be recalled at any time if their conduct displeases their constituents, cannot be a tyrannical one, as your loyalists represent it; who, at the same time, inconsistently desire to return and live under it. And among an intelligent enlightened people as ours is, there must always be too numerous and too strong a party for supporting good government and the laws, to suffer what is called anarchy. This better account of our situation must be pleasing to your humanity, and therefore I give it you.

But we differ a little in our sentiments respecting the loyalists (as they call themselves) and the conduct of America towards them, which you think "seems actuated by a spirit of revenge; and that it would have been more agreeable to policy as well as justice to have restored their estates, upon their taking the oaths of allegiance to the new governments." That there should still be some resentment against them in the breasts of those who have had their houses, farms, and towns so lately destroyed, and relations scalped under the conduct of these royalists, is not wonderful; though I believe the opposition given by many to their re-establishment among us is owing to a firm persuasion, that there could be no reliance on their oaths; and that the effect of receiving those people again, would be an introduction of that very anarchy and confusion they falsely reproach us with. Even the example you propose of the English commonwealth's restoring the estates of the royalists after their being subdued, seems rather to countenance and encourage our acting differently, as probably if the power, which always accompanies property, had not been restored to the royalists; if their estates had remained confiscated and their persons had been banished, they could not have so much contributed to the restoration of kingly power, and the new government of the republic

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might have been more durable. The majority of examples in your history are on the other side of the question. All the estates in England and south of Scotland, and most of those possessed by the descendants of the English in Ireland, are held from ancient confiscations made of the estates of Caledonians, and Britons the original possessors in your island, or the native Irish, in the last century only. It is but a few months since, that your parliament has in a few instances, given up confiscations incurred by a rebellion suppressed forty years ago. The war against us was begun by a general act of parliament declaring all our estates confiscated, and probably one great motive to the loyalty of the royalists was the hope of sharing in these confiscations. They have played a deep game, staking their estates against ours; and they have been unsuccessful. But it is a surer game, since they had promises to rely on from your government of indemnification in case of loss; and I see your parliament is about to fulfil those promises. To this I have no objection, because though still our enemies, they are men; they are in necessity; and I think even an hired assassin has a right to his pay from his employer: it seems too more reasonable that the expense of paying these should fall upon the government who encouraged the mischief done, rather than upon us who suffered it; the confiscated estates making amends but for a small part of that mischief: it is not therefore clear that our retaining them is chargeable with injustice. I have hinted above, that the name *loyalists*, was improperly assumed by these people. *Royalists* they may perhaps be called. But the true *loyalists*, were the people of America against whom they acted. No people were ever known more truly loyal, and universally so, to their sovereigns: the protestant succession in the House of Hanover was their idol. Not a jacobite was to be found from one end of the colonies to the other. They were affectionate to the people of England, zealous and forward to assist in her wars, by voluntary contributions of men and money, even beyond their proportion. The king and parliament had frequently acknowledged this by public messages, resolutions,

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and reimbursements. But they were equally fond of what they esteemed their rights, and if they resisted when those were attacked, it was a resistance in favour of a British constitution, which every Englishman might share in enjoying who should come to live among them: it was resisting arbitrary impositions that were contrary to common right and to their fundamental constitutions, and to constant ancient usage. It was indeed a resistance in favour of the liberties of England, which might have been endangered by success in the attempt against ours; and therefore a great man in your parliament did not scruple to declare, he *rejoiced that America had resisted.* I, for the same reason, may add this very resistance to the other instances of their loyalty. I have already said that I think it just you should reward those Americans who joined your troops in the war against their own country: but if ever honesty could be inconsistent with policy, it is so in this instance.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable David Hartley.

Passy, July 5, 1785.

I CANNOT quit the coasts of Europe without taking leave of my ever dear friend Mr. Hartley. We were long fellow-laborers in the best of all works, the work of peace. I leave you still in the field, but having finished my day's task, I am going home *to go to bed:* Wish me a good night's rest, as I do you a pleasant evening. Adieu! and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN,

In his 80th year.

To Granville Sharp, Esq.

Passy, July 5, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED the books you were so kind as to send me by Mr. Drown. Please to accept my hearty thanks. Your writings, which always have some public good for their object, I always read with pleasure. I am perfectly of your opinion

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with respect to the salutary law, of gavel kind, and hope it may in time be established throughout America. In six of the states already the lands of the intestate are divided equally among the children if all girls; but there is a double share given to the eldest son, for which I see no more reason than in giving such share to the eldest daughter; and think there should be no distinction. Since my being last in France, I have seen several of our eldest sons, spending idly their fortunes by residing in Europe, and neglecting their own country; these are from the southern states. The northern young men stay at home, and are industrious useful citizens; the more equal division of their fathers' fortunes not enabling them to ramble and spend their shares abroad, which is so much the better for their country.

I like your piece on the election of bishops. There is a fact in Hollingshead's Chronicle, the latter part relating to Scotland, which shews, if my memory does not deceive me, that the first bishop in that country was elected by the clergy: I mentioned it some time past in a letter to two young men,[7] who asked my advice about obtaining ordination, which had been denied them by the bishops in England, unless they would take the oath of allegiance to the king; and I said, I imagine that unless a bishop is soon sent over, with a power to consecrate others, so that we may have no future occasion of applying to England for ordination, we may think it right, after reading your piece, to elect also.

The liturgy you mention, was an abridgment of that made by a noble lord of my acquaintance, who requested me to assist him by taking the rest of the book, viz. the catechism and the reading and singing psalms. These I abridged by retaining of the catechism, only the two questions, *What is your duty to God? What is your duty to your neighbor?* with answers. The psalms were much contracted by leaving out the repetitions (of which I found more than I could have imagined) and the imprecations, which appeared not to suit well

[7] See Letter to Messrs. Weems and Gant, July 18, 1784, Page 138.

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the christian doctrine of forgiveness of injuries, and doing good to enemies. The book was printed for Wilkie, in St. Paul's church yard, but never much noticed. Some were given away, very few sold, and I suppose the bulk became waste paper. In the prayers so much was retrenched, that approbation could hardly be expected; but I think with you a moderate abridgment might not only be useful, but generally acceptable.

I am now on the point of departing for America, where I shall be glad occasionally to hear from you, and of your welfare;

Being with sincere and great esteem, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To His Excellency General Washington.

Philadelphia, Sept. 20, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I AM just arrived from a country where the reputation of general Washington runs very high, and where every body wishes to see him in person; but being told that it is not likely he will ever favor them with a visit, they hope at least for a sight of his perfect resemblance, by means of their principal statuary, Mr. Houdon, whom Mr. Jefferson and myself agreed with to come over for the purpose of taking a bust, in order to make the intended statue for the state of Virginia. He is here, but the materials and instruments he sent down the Seine from Paris not being arrived at Havre when we sailed, he was obliged to leave them, and is now busied in supplying himself here. As soon as that is done, he proposes to wait on you in Virginia, as he understands there is no prospect of your coming hither, which would indeed make me very happy; as it would give me the opportunity of congratulating with you personally on the final success of your long and painful labors in the service of our country, which have laid us all under eternal obligations.

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With the greatest and most sincere esteem and respect, I am, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable Dr. Franklin.

(Answer to the foregoing.)

Mount Vernon, Sept. 26, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I HAD just written, and was about to put into the hands of Mr. Taylor, (a gentleman in the department of the secretary for foreign affairs,) the inclosed letter, when I had the honor to receive your favor of the 20th instant.

I have a grateful sense of the partiality of the French nation towards me. And I feel very sensibly for the indulgent expression of your letter, which does me great honor.

When it suits Mr. Houdon to come hither, I will accommodate him in the best manner I am able, and shall endeavor to render his stay as agreeable as I can.

It would give me infinite pleasure to see you. At this place I dare not look for it, although to entertain you under my own roof would be doubly gratifying. When or whether ever, I shall have the satisfaction of seeing you at Philadelphia, is uncertain, as retirement from the walks of public life has not been so productive of that leisure and ease, as might have been expected.

With very great esteem and respect, I am, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

G. WASHINGTON.

To Mr. and Mrs. Jay.

Philadelphia, Sept. 21, 1785.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I RECEIVED your very kind letter of the 16th, congratulating me on my safe arrival with my grandsons; an event that indeed makes me very happy, being what I have long ardently wished, and considering the growing infirmities of

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age, began almost to despair of. I am now in the bosom of my family, and find four new little prattlers, who cling about the knees of their grandpapa, and afford me great pleasure. The affectionate welcome I met with from my fellow-citizens, is far beyond my expectation; I bore my voyage very well, and find myself rather better for it, so that I have every possible reason to be satisfied with my having undertaken and performed it. When I was at Passy, I could not bear a wheel carriage; and being discouraged in my project of descending the Seine in a boat, by the difficulties and tediousness of its navigation in so dry a season, I accepted the offer of one of the king's litters, carried by large mules, which brought me well, though in walking slowly, to Havre. Thence I went over in a packet boat to Southampton, where I staid four days, till the ship came for me to Spithead. Several of my London friends came there to see me, particularly the good bishop of St. Asaph and family, who staid with me to the last. In short I am now so well, as to think it possible that I may once more have the pleasure of seeing you both perhaps at New York, with my dear young friends (who I hope may not have quite forgotten me) for I imagine that on a sandy road between Burlington and Amboy, I could bear an easy coach, and the rest is water.

I rejoice to hear that you continue well, being with true and great esteem and affection, your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To David Hartley, Esq.

Philadelphia, Oct. 27, 1715.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED at Havre de Grace six copies of your print, which I have brought with me hither. I shall frame and keep one of them in my best room. I shall send one to Mr. Jay, and give the others among some friends, who esteem and respect you as we do.

Your newspapers are filled with accounts of distresses and

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miseries that these states are plunged into since a separation from Britain. You may believe me, when I tell you there is no truth in those accounts. I find all property in lands and houses augmented vastly in value; that of houses and towns at least fourfold. The crops have been plentiful, and yet the produce sells high, to the great profit of the farmer. At the same time all imported goods sell at low rates, some cheaper than the first cost. Working people have plenty of employ and high pay for their labor. These appear to me as certain signs of public prosperity. Some traders indeed complain that trade is dead; but this pretended evil is not an effect of inability in the people to buy, pay for, and consume the usual articles of commerce, as far as they have occasion for them, it is owing merely to there being too many traders who have crowded hither from all parts of Europe, with more goods than the natural demand of the country requires. And what in Europe is called the debt of America is chiefly the debt of these adventurers and supercargoes to their principals, with which the settled inhabitants of America, who never paid better, for what they want to buy, have nothing to do. As to the contentment of the inhabitants with the change of government, methinks a stronger proof cannot be desired, than what they have given in my reception. You know the part I had in that change, and you see in the papers the addresses from all ranks with which your friend was welcomed home, and the sentiments they contain confirmed yesterday in the choice of him for President, by the council and new assembly, which was unanimous, a single voice in seventy-seven excepted.

I remembered you used to wish for newspapers from America. Herewith I send a few, and you shall be regularly supplied, if you can put me in a way of sending them, so as that you may not be obliged to pay postage.

With unchangeable esteem and respect I am, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To M. Mathon de la Cour.

Philadelphia, Nov. 18, 1785.

SIR,

I RECEIVED duly the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 25th of June past, together with the collection you have made *comptes des rendus de vos controleurs generaux;* and your *Discours sur les moyens d'encourager le patriotisme dans les monarchies.* The first is a valuable work, as containing a great deal of useful information; but the second I am particularly charmed with, the sentiments being delightfully just, and expressed with such force and clearness, that I am persuaded the pamphlet, though small, must have a great effect, on the minds of both princes and people, and thence be productive of much good to mankind. Be pleased to accept my hearty thanks for both.

It is right to be sowing good seed whenever we have an opportunity, since some of it may be productive. An instance of this you should be acquainted with, as it may afford you pleasure. The reading of Fortuné Ricard's Testament, has put it into the head and heart of a citizen to leave two thousand pounds sterling to two American cities, who are to lend it in small sums at five per cent. to young beginners in business; and the accumulation, after an hundred years, to be laid out in public works of benefit to those cities.*

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Bancroft, F. R. S. &c. London.

Philadelphia, Nov. 26, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of September 5, informing me of the intention Mr. Dilly has of printing a new edition of my writings, and of his desire that I would furnish him

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* See Dr. Franklin's Will Vol I.

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with such additions, as I may think proper. At present all my papers and manuscripts are so mixt with other things, by the confusions occasioned in sudden and various removals, during the late troubles, that I can hardly find any thing. But having nearly finished an addition to my house, which will afford me room to put all in order, I hope soon to be able to comply with such a request; but I hope Mr. Dilly will have a good understanding in the affair, with Henry and Johnson, who having risqued the former impressions, may suppose they thereby acquired some right in the copy. As to the Life proposed to be written, if it be by the same hand who furnished a sketch to Dr. Lettsom, which he sent me, I am afraid it will be found too full of errors for either you or me to correct: and having been persuaded by my friends, Messrs. Vaughan and Monsieur Le Veillard, Mr. James of this place, and some others, that such a Life, written by myself, may be useful to the rising generation, I have made some progress in it, and hope to finish it this winter: so I cannot but wish that project of Mr. Dilly's biographer may be laid aside. I am nevertheless thankful to you for your friendly offer of correcting it.

As to public affairs, it is long since I gave over all expectations of a commercial treaty between us and Britain; and I think we can do as well, or better without one than she can. Our harvests are plenty, our produce fetches a high price in hard money, and there is in every part of our country, incontestible marks of public felicity. We discover, indeed, some errors in our general and particular constitutions; which it is no wonder they should have, the time in which they were formed being considered. But these we shall soon mend. The little disorders you have heard of in some of the states, raised by a few wrong heads, are subsiding, and will probably soon be extinguished.

My best wishes, and those of my family attend you. We shall be happy to see you here, when it suits you to visit us: being with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

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To Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.

Philadelphia, Feb. 24, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED lately your kind letter of November 27. My reception here, was, as you have heard, very honorable indeed; but I was betrayed by it, and by some remains of ambition, from which I had imagined myself free, to accept of the chair of government for the state of Pennsylvania, when the proper thing for me was repose and a private life. I hope however to be able to bear the fatigue for one year and then to retire.

I have much regretted our having so little opportunity for conversation when we last met.[a] You could have given me informations and counsels that I wanted, but we were scarce a minute together without being broken in upon. I am to thank you however for the pleasure I had after our parting, in reading the new book[b] you gave me, which I think generally well written and likely to do good: though the reading time of most people is of late so taken up with newspapers, and little periodical pamphlets, that few now-a-days venture to attempt reading a quarto volume. I have admired to see that in the last century, a folio, *Burton on Melancholy*, went through six editions in about forty years. We have, I believe, more readers now, but not of such large books.

You seem desirous of knowing what progress we make here in improving our governments. We are I think in the right road of improvement, for we are making experiments. I do not oppose all that seem wrong, for the multitude are more effectually set right by experience, than kept from going wrong by reasoning with them. And I think we are daily more and more enlightened; so that I have no doubt of our obtaining in a few years as much public felicity as good government is capable of affording. Your newspapers are filled

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[a] At Southampton, previous to Dr. Franklin's embarking for the United States.

[b] Paley's Moral Philosophy.

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with fictitious accounts of anarchy, confusion, distresses, and miseries we are supposed to be involved in, as consequences of the revolution; and the few remaining friends of the old government among us, take pains to magnify every little inconvenience a change in the course of commerce may have occasioned. To obviate the complaints they endeavor to excite, was written the inclosed little piece,[c] from which you may form a truer idea of our situation, than your own public prints would give you. And I can assure you that the great body of our nation find themselves happy in the change, and have not the smallest inclination to return to the domination of Britain. There could not be a stronger proof of the general approbation of the measures that promoted the change, and of the change itself, than has been given by the assembly and council of this state, in the nearly unanimous choice for their governor, of one who had been so much concerned in those measures; the assembly being themselves the unbribed choice of the people, and therefore may be truly supposed of the same sentiments. I say nearly unanimous, because of between seventy and eighty votes, there were only my own, and one other in the negative.

As to my domestic circumstances, of which you kindly desire to hear something, they are at present as happy as I could wish them. I am surrounded by my offspring, a dutiful and affectionate daughter in my house, with six grand children, the eldest of which you have seen, who is now at college in the next street, finishing the learned part of his education; the others promising both for parts and good dispositions. What their conduct may be when they grow up and enter the important scenes of life, I shall not live to *see*, and I cannot *foresee*. I therefore enjoy among them the present hour, and leave the future to Providence.

He that raises a large family, does indeed, while he lives to observe them, *stand*, as Watts says, *a broader mark for sorrow;* but then he stands a broader mark for pleasure too.

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[c] Uncertain what piece is alluded to.

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When we launch our little fleet of barks into the ocean, bound to different ports, we hope for each a prosperous voyage; but contrary winds, hidden shoals, storms and enemies come in for a share in the disposition of events; and though these occasion a mixture of disappointment, yet considering the risk where we can make no insurance, we should think ourselves happy if some return with success. My son's son, (Temple Franklin) whom you have also seen, having had a fine farm of 600 acres conveyed to him by his father, when we were at Southampton, has dropped for the present his views of acting in the political line, and applies himself ardently to the study and practice of agriculture. This is much more agreeable to me, who esteem it the most useful, the most independent, and therefore the noblest of employments. His lands are on navigable water, communicating with the Delaware, and but about 16 miles from this city. He has associated to himself a very skilful English farmer lately arrived here, who is to instruct him in the business, and partakes for a term of the profits; so that there is a great apparent probability of their success. You will kindly expect a word or two concerning myself. My health and spirits continue, thanks to God, as when you saw me. The only complaint I then had, does not grow worse, and is tolerable. I still have enjoyment in the company of my friends; and being easy in my circumstances, have many reasons to like living. But the course of nature must soon put a period to my present mode of existence. This I shall submit to with less regret, as, having seen during a long life a good deal of this world, I feel a growing curiosity to be acquainted with some other; and can cheerfully with filial confidence resign my spirit to the conduct of that great and good Parent of mankind who created it, and who has so graciously protected and prospered me from my birth to the present hour. Wherever I am, I always hope to retain the pleasing remembrance of your friendship, being with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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We all join in respects to Mrs. Shipley, and best wishes for the whole amiable family.

To M. le Veillard, of Passy.

Philadelphia, March 6, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED and read with great pleasure your kind letter of October 9. It informed me of your welfare, and that of the best of good women, and of her amiable daughter, who I think will tread in her steps. My effects came all in the same ship, in good order; and we are now drinking every day *les eaux epurées de Passy*, with great satisfaction, as they kept well, and seem to be rendered more agreeable by the long voyage. I am here in the bosom of my family, and am not only happy myself, but have the felicity of seeing my country so. Be assured that all the stories spread in the English papers of our distresses, and confusions, and discontents with our new governments, are as chimerical as the history of my being in chains at Algiers. They exist only in the wishes of our enemies. America never was in higher prosperity, her produce abundant and bearing a good price, her working people all employed and well paid, and all property in lands and houses of more than treble the value it bore before the war; and our commerce being no longer the monopoly of British merchants, we are furnished with all the foreign commodities we need, at much more reasonable rates than heretofore. So that we have no doubt of being able to discharge more speedily the debt incurred by the war than at first was apprehended. Our modes of collecting taxes are indeed as yet imperfect, and we have need of more skill in financiering; but we improve in that kind of knowledge daily by experience. That our people are contented with the revolution, with their new constitutions, and their foreign connections, nothing can afford a stronger proof, than the universally cordial and joyous reception with which they welcomed the return of one that was supposed to have had a consider-

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able share in promoting them. All this is in answer to that part of your letter, in which you seem to have been too much impressed with some ideas, which those lying English papers endeavor to inculcate concerning us.

I am astonished by what you write concerning the *prince Evêque.*[d] If the charges against him are made good, it will be another instance of the truth of those proverbs which teach us, that *prodigality begets necessity,* that *without economy no revenue is sufficient,* and that *it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*

I am glad to hear of the marriage of Miss Brillon; for every thing that may contribute to the happiness of that beloved family, gives me pleasure. Be pleased to offer them my felicitations, and assure them of my best wishes.

Will you also be so good as to present my respectful compliments to madame la duchesse d'Enville, and to M. le duc de la Rochefoucault? you may communicate the political part of this letter to that excellent man. His good heart will rejoice to hear of the welfare of America.

I made no progress when at sea in the history you mention:[e] but I was not idle there, having written three pieces, each of some length: one on nautical matters; another on Chimnies; and the third a description of my Vase for consuming Smoke, with directions for using it.[f] These are all now printing in the Transactions of our Philosophical Society, of which I hope soon to send you a copy.

My grandsons present their compliments. The eldest is very busy in preparing for a country life, being to enter upon his farm the 25th instant. It consists of about 600 acres, bounding on navigable water, sixteen miles from Philadelphia. The youngest is at college, very diligent in his studies. You know my situation, involved in public cares, but they

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[d] The cardinal de Rohan.

[e] Dr. Franklin's, "*Memoirs of his Life.*"

[f] See "*Letters and Papers on Philosophical Subjects.*" Vol. III.

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cannot make me forget that you and I love one another, and that I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Hewson, London.

Philadelphia, May 6, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

A LONG winter has passed and I have not had the pleasure of a line from you, acquainting me with your and your children's welfare, since I left England. I suppose you have been in Yorkshire, out of the way and knowledge of opportunities; for I will not think you have forgotten me. To make me some amends, I received a few days past a large packet from Mr. Williams, dated September, 1776, near ten years since, containing three letters from you, one of December 12, 1775. This packet had been received by Mr. Bache, after my departure for France, lay dormant among his papers during all my absence, and has just now broke out upon me *like words*, that had been as somebody says, *congealed in Northern air*. Therein I find all the pleasing little family history of your children; how William had begun to spell, overcoming by strength of memory all the difficulty occasioned by the common wretched alphabet; while you were convinced of the utility of our new one. How Tom, genius-like, struck out new paths, and relinquishing the old names of the letters, called U *Bell* and P *Bottle*. How Eliza began to grow jolly, that is fat and handsome, resembling aunt Rooke whom I used to call *my lovely*. Together with all the *then* news of lady Blunt's having produced at length a boy; of Dolly's being well, and of poor good Catherine's decease. Of your affairs with Muir and Atkinson, and of their contract for feeding the fish in the channel. Of the Vinys, and their jaunt to Cambridge in the long carriages. Of Dolly's journey to Wales with Mr. Scot. Of the Wilkes's, the Pearces, Elphinston, &c. &c. Concluding with a kind of promise, that as soon as the ministry and congress agreed to make peace,

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I should have you with me in America. That peace has been some time made, but alas! the promise is not yet fulfilled.—And why is it not fulfilled?

I have found my family here in health, good circumstances, and well respected by their fellow citizens. The companions of my youth are indeed almost all departed, but I find an agreeable society among their children and grand children. I have public business enough to preserve me from *ennui*, and private amusement besides, in conversation, books, my garden, *and cribbage*. Considering our well furnished plentiful market as the best of gardens, I am turning mine, in the midst of which my house stands, into grass plats, and gravel walks with trees and flowering shrubs. Cards we sometimes play here in long winter evenings, but it is as they play at chess, not for money but for honor, or the pleasure of beating one another. This will not be quite a novelty to you; as you may remember we played together in that manner during the winter you helped me to pass so agreeably at Passy. I have indeed now and then a little compunction in reflecting that I spend time so idly; but another reflection comes to relieve me, [*whispering*] "You know the soul is immortal; why then should you be such a niggard of a little time, when you have a whole eternity before you?" So being easily convinced, and, like other reasonable creatures, satisfied with a small reason, when it is in favor of doing what I have a mind to do, I shuffle the cards again and begin another game.

As to public amusements, we have neither plays nor operas, but we had yesterday a kind of oratorio, as you will see by the inclosed paper; and we have assemblies, balls, and concerts, besides little parties at one another's houses, in which there is sometimes dancing, and frequently good music; so that we jog on in life as pleasantly as you do in England, any where but in London; for there you have plays performed by good actors. That however is, I think, the only advantage London has over Philadelphia.

Temple has turned his thoughts to agriculture, which he pursues ardently, being in possession of a fine farm that his

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father lately conveyed to him. Ben is finishing his studies at college, and continues to behave as well as when you knew him, so that I still think he will make you a good son. His younger brothers and sisters are also all promising, appearing to have good tempers and dispositions, as well as good constitutions. As to myself, I think my general health and spirits rather better than when you saw me, and the particular malady I then complained of, continues tolerable.

With sincere and very great esteem, I am ever, my dear dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. My children and grand children join with me in best wishes for you and yours. My love to my godson, to Eliza, and to honest Tom. They will all find agreeable companions here. Love to Dolly,[6] and tell her she will do well to come with you.

Mrs. Partridge, Boston.

Philadelphia, June 3, 1786.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I HAVE just received your kind letter, of the 14th past, which give me great pleasure as it informed me of your welfare, you complain with reason of my being a bad correspondent. I confess I have long deserved that character. If you keep my old letters, as I think you once told me you did, you will find in one of July 17, 1767, the best apology I could then make for that fault, and I cannot now make a better. I must therefore refer you to it, only requesting that you would ascribe my neglect of writing to any cause rather than to a diminution of that tender, affectionate regard I always had, and still retain for you.

I hoped for repose when I solicited my recal from France, but I have not met with it, being as much engaged in business as ever. I enjoy however, a good share of health, (the

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[6] Mrs. Dorothy Blunt.

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stone excepted) as does all this family, who join with me in best wishes of happiness to you and yours.

I am ever my dear niece, your affectionate uncle,

B. FRANKLIN,

In his 81st year.

To Noah Webster, Esq.

Philadelphia, June 18, 1786.

SIR,

I RECEIVED the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 24th past with the scheme inclosed of your reformed Alphabet. I think the reformation not only necessary but practicable; but have so much to say to you on the subject, that I wish to see and confer with you upon it, as that would save much time and writing. Sounds, 'till such an alphabet is fixed, not being easily explained or discoursed of clearly upon paper. I have formerly considered this matter pretty fully, and contrived some of the means of carrying it into execution, so as gradually to render the reformation general. Our ideas are so nearly similar that I make no doubt of our easily agreeing on the plan, and you may depend on the best support I may be able to give it, as a part of your institute, of which I wish you would bring with you a complete copy, having as yet seen only a part of it: I shall then be better able to recommend it as you desire.

Hoping to have soon the pleasure of seeing you, I do not enlarge, but am with sincere esteem, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To William Cook, Esq.

Philadelphia, August 13, 1786.

SIR,

I RECEIVED yesterday the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 15th of June past. I had never before been acquainted that the name of your intended New

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State, had any relation with my name, having understood that it was called *Frank Land*. It is a very great honor indeed that its inhabitants have done me, and I should be happy if it were in my power to show how sensible I am of it, by something more essential than my wishes for their prosperity.

Having resided some years past in Europe, and being but lately arrived thence, I have not had an opportunity of being well informed of the points in dispute between you and the State of North Carolina. I can therefore only say, that I think you are perfectly right in resolving to submit them to the discretion of congress, and to abide by their determination. It is a wise and impartial tribunal, which can have no sinister views to warp its judgment. 'Tis happy for us all, that we have now in our own country such a council to apply to, for composing our differences, without being obliged, as formerly, to carry them across the ocean to be decided, at an immense expense, by a council which knew little of our affairs, would hardly take any pains to understand them, and which often treated our applications with contempt, and rejected them with injurious language. Let us therefore cherish and respect our own tribunal, for the more generally it is held in high regard, the more able it will be to answer effectually the ends of its institution, the quieting of our contentions, and thereby promoting our common peace and happiness.

I do not hear any talk of an adjournment of congress concerning which you inquire; and I rather think it likely they may continue to sit out their year, as it is but lately they have been able to make a quorum for business, which must therefore probably be in arrear. If you proceed in your intended journey, I shall be glad to see you as you pass through Philadelphia.

In the mean time, I have the honor to be very respectfully, sir, your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Colonel Hunter.

Philadelphia, Nov. 24, 1786.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

IT rejoiced me much to learn, by your kind letter of February last, which I received about ten days since, that you are still in the land of the living; and that you are snug at Bath, the very place that I think gives you the best chance of passing the evening of life agreeably. I too am got into my *niche*, after being kept out of it 24 years by foreign employments. 'Tis a very good house that I built so long ago to retire into, without being able till now to enjoy it. I am again surrounded by my friends, with a fine family of grand children about my knees, and an affectionate good daughter and son-in-law to take care of me. And after fifty years public service, I have the pleasure to find the esteem of my country with regard to me undiminished; the late re-election of me to the presidentship, notwithstanding the different parties we are split into, being absolutely unanimous. This I tell to you, not merely to indulge my own vanity, but because I know you love me, and will be pleased to hear of whatever happens that is agreeable to your friend.

I find Mr. Anstey, whom you recommend to me, a very agreeable sensible man, and shall render him any service that may lie in my power. I thank you for the New Bath Guide: I had read it formerly, but it has afforded me fresh pleasure.

Your newspapers, to please honest *John Bull*, paint our situation here in frightful colours, as if we were miserable since we broke our connection with him. But I will give you some marks by which you may form your own judgment. Our husbandmen, who are the bulk of the nation, have had plentiful crops, their produce sells at high prices and for ready hard money: wheat for instance at 8*s.* and 8*s.* 6*d.* per bushel. Our working people are all employed and get high wages, are well fed and well clad. Our estates in houses

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are trebled in value by the rising of rents since the revolution. Buildings in Philadelphia increase amazingly, besides small towns arising in every quarter of the country. The laws govern, justice is well administered, and property as secure as in any country on the globe. Our wilderness lands are daily buying up by new settlers, and our settlements extend rapidly to the westward. European goods were never so cheaply afforded us, as since Britain has no longer the monopoly of supplying us. In short all among us may be happy—who have happy dispositions,—such being necessary to happiness even in paradise.

I speak these things of Pennsylvania, with which I am most acquainted: as to the other states, when I read in all the papers of the extravagant rejoicings every 4th of July, the day on which was signed the Declaration of Independence, I am convinced that none of them are discontented with the revolution.

Adieu! my dear friend, and believe me ever with sincere esteem and affection, yours most truly,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Small.

Philadelphia, Feb. 19, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your favor of June last, and thank you for the kind congratulations contained in it. What you have heard of my malady is true, "that it does not grow worse." Thanks be to God, I still enjoy pleasure in the society of my friends and books, and much more in the prosperity of my country, concerning which your people are continually deceiving themselves.

I am glad the improvement of the Book of Common Prayer has met with your approbation and that of good Mrs. Baldwin. It is not yet that I know of, received in public practice any where; but as it is said that good motions never die, perhaps in time it may be found useful.

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I read with pleasure the account you give of the flourishing state of your commerce and manufactures, and of the plenty you have of resources to carry the nation through all its difficulties. You have one of the finest countries in the world, and if you can be cured of the folly of making war for trade, (in which wars more has been always expended than the profits of any trade can compensate) you may make it one of the happiest. Make the best of your own natural advantages instead of endeavoring to diminish those of other nations, and there is no doubt but you may yet prosper and flourish. Your beginning to consider France no longer as a natural enemy, is a mark of progress in the good sense of the nation, of which posterity will find the benefit; in the rarity of wars, the diminution of taxes, and increase of riches.

As to the refugees, whom you think we were so impolitic in rejecting, I do not find that they are missed here, or that any body regrets their absence. And certainly they must be *happier where they are, under the government they admire;* and be better received among a people whose cause they espoused and fought for, than among those who cannot so soon have forgotten the destruction of their habitations and the spilt blood of their dearest friends and near relations.

I often think with great pleasure on the happy days I passed in England with my and your learned and ingenious friends, who have left us to join the majority in the world of spirits. Every one of them now knows more than all of us they have left behind. It is to me a comfortable reflection, that since we must live forever in a future state, there is a sufficient stock of amusement in reserve for us, to be found in constantly learning something new to eternity, the present quantity of human ignorance infinitely exceeding human knowledge.

Adieu! my dear friend, and believe me in whatever world, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN,

In his 82d year.

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To M. le Veillard.

Philadelphia, April 15, 1787.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM quite of your opinion that our independence is not quite complete, till we have discharged our public debt. This state is not behind hand in its proportion, and those who are in arrear, are actually employed in contriving means to discharge their respective balances, but they are not all equally diligent in the business, nor equally successful, the whole will however be paid, I am persuaded, in a few years.

The English have not yet delivered up the posts on our frontier, agreeable to treaty; the pretence is, that our merchants here have not paid their debts. I was a little provoked when I first heard this, and I wrote some remarks upon it which I send you: they have been written near a year, but I have not yet published them, being unwilling to encourage any of our people who may be able to pay, in their neglect of that duty. The paper is therefore only for your amusement and that of our excellent friend the duke de la Rochefoucauld.

As to my malady concerning which you so kindly inquire, I have never had the least doubt of its being the stone; and I am sensible that it has increased; but on the whole it does not give me more pain than when at Passy. People who live long, who will drink of the cup of life to the very bottom, must expect to meet with some of the usual dregs; and when I reflect on the number of terrible maladies human nature is subject to, I think myself favored in having to my share only the stone and gout.

You were right in conjecturing that I wrote the remarks on the "*thoughts concerning executive justice.*" I have no copy of those remarks at hand, and forget how the saying was introduced that it is better a thousand guilty persons should escape, than one innocent suffer. Your criticisms thereon appear to be just, and I imagine you may have misapprehended my intention in mentioning it. I always thought with

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you, that the prejudice in Europe which supposes a family dishonored by the punishment of one of its members, was very absurd, it being on the contrary my opinion, that a rogue hanged out of a family does it more honor than ten that live in it.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Duke de la Rochefoucauld. Paris.

Philadelphia, April 15, 1787.

I HAVE been happy in receiving three very kind letters from my greatly respected and esteemed friend, since my being in America. They are dated November 30, '85, February 8, '86, January 14, '87. In mine of this date to M. le Veillard, I have made the best apology I could, for my being so bad a correspondent. I will not trouble you with a repetition of it, as I know you often see him. I will only confess my fault, and trust to your candor and goodness for my pardon.

Your friendly congratulations on my arrival and reception here were very obliging. The latter was, as you have heard, extremely flattering. The two parties in the assembly and council, the constitutionists and anti-constitutionists joined in requesting my service as counsellor, and afterwards in electing me as president. Of seventy-four members in council and assembly, who voted by ballot, there was in my first election but one negative beside my own; and in the second, after a year's service only my own. And I experience from all the principal people in the government, every attention and assistance that can be desired towards making the task as little burthensome to me as possible. So I am going on very comfortably hitherto with my second year, and I do not at present see any likelihood of a change: but future events are always uncertain, being governed by Providence or subject to chances; and popular favor is very precarious, being sometimes *lost* as well as *gained* by good actions, so I do not depend on a continuance of my present happiness, and therefore shall not be surprised if before my time of service expires, something should happen to diminish it.

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These states in general enjoy peace and plenty. There have been some disorders in the Massachusetts and Rhode Island governments; those in the former are quelled for the present: those of the latter, being contentions for and against paper money, will probably continue some time. Maryland too is divided on the same subject, the assembly being for it and the senate against it. Each is now employed in endeavoring to gain the people to its party, against the next elections, and 'tis probable the assembly may prevail. Paper money in moderate quantities has been found beneficial; when more than the occasions of commerce require, it depreciated and was mischievous; and the populace are apt to demand more than is necessary. In this state we have some, and it is useful, and I do not hear any clamor for more.

There seems to be but little thought at present in the particular states, of mending their particular constitutions; but the grand federal constitution is generally blamed, as not having given sufficient powers to congress, the federal head. A convention is therefore appointed to revise that constitution, and propose a better. You will see by the inclosed paper that your friend is to be one in that business, though he doubts his malady may not permit his giving constant attendance. I am glad to see that you are named as one of a general assembly to be convened in France. I flatter myself that great good may accrue to that dear nation from the deliberations of such an assembly. I pray God to give it his blessing.

I sympathise with you and the family most sincerely, in the great loss sustained by the decease of that excellent woman.[h] It must be indeed a heavy one. My best wishes attend those that remain, and that the happiness of your sweet domestic society may long continue without such another interruption.

I send herewith a volume of the transactions of our Philosophical Society for you, another for M. de Condorcet, and a third for the Academy. The war had interrupted our at-

[h] The duchess D'Anville, mother of the duke de la Rochefoucauld.

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tempts to improve ourselves in scientific matters, but we now begin to resume them.

The bearer of this is Mr. Paine, the author of a famous piece entitled *Common Sense*, published here, with great effect on the minds of the people at the beginning of the revolution. He is an ingenious, honest man, and as such I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities. He carries with him the model of a bridge of a new construction, his own invention, concerning which I intended to have recommended him to Mr. Peyronnet, but I hear he is no more. You can easily procure Mr. Paine a sight of the models and drawings of the collection appertaining to the *Ponts et Chaussées;* they must afford him useful lights on the subject. We want a bridge over our river Schuylkill, and have no artist here regularly bred to that kind of architecture.

My grandsons are very sensible of the honor of your remembrance, and desire me to present their respects.

With the most sincere and perfect esteem and attachment, I am ever, my dear friend, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Marquis de Chastelleux.[1]

Philadelphia, April 17, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR most pleasing letter, accompanied by the invaluable present of your journal, and translation of colonel Humphreys's poem, came to hand but lately, though dated in June last. I believe they have been in the West Indies. They have given me a great deal of pleasure in the perusal, as

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[1] FRANÇOIS JEAN MARQUIS DE CHASTELLEUX, camp marshal in the French army, and a member of the Academy, died at Paris, October 24, 1788. He was of an illustrious family to which he was an ornament by his military services and his literary works, of which the principal are, a Treatise on Public Happiness, 8vo, and Travels in North America in 1780, —1782. 8vo.

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every thing of yours always did. The portrait you hav made of our country and people, is what in painting is calle *a handsome likeness*, for which we are much obliged to you We shall be the better for it if we endeavor to merit wha you kindly say in our favor, and to correct what you justly censure. I am told the journal is translated into English, and printed in one of the states, I know not which, not having seen the translation.

The newspapers tell us, that you are about to have an assembly of Notables, to consult on improvements of your government. It is somewhat singular, that we should be engaged in the same project here at the same time, but so it is, and a convention for the purpose of revising and amending our federal constitution is to meet at this place next month. I hope both assemblies will be blessed with success, and that their deliberations and counsels may promote the happiness of both nations.

In the state of Pennsylvania, government, notwithstanding our parties, goes on at present very smoothly, so that I have much less trouble in my station, than was expected. Massachusetts has lately been disturbed by some disorderly people; but they are now quelled. The rest of the states go on pretty well, except some dissentions in Rhode Island and Maryland respecting paper money. Mr. Paine whom you know, and who undertakes to deliver this letter to you, can give you full information of our affairs, and therefore I need not enlarge upon them. I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities. I have fulfilled all your commissions to the ladies here, who are much flattered by your kind remembrance of them.

My family join in every sentiment of esteem and respect with, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Messrs. les Abbés Chalut and Arnaud.

Philadelphia, April 17, 1787.

DEAR FRIENDS,

YOUR reflections, on our situation compared with that of many nations of Europe, are very sensible and just. Let me add, that only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.

Our affairs go on as well as can reasonably be expected after so great an overturning. We have had some disorders in different parts of the country, but we arrange them as they arise, and are daily mending and improving; so that I have no doubt but all will come right in time.

Yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

To M. le Marquis de la Fayette.

Philadelphia, April 17, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED the kind letter you did me the honor of writing in February, 1786. The indolence of old age, and the perpetual teasing of too much business, have made me so bad a correspondent, that I have hardly written a letter to any friend in Europe during the last twelvemonth: but as I have always a pleasure in hearing from them, which I cannot expect will be continued if I do not write to them, I again take up my pen, and begin with those whose correspondence is of the greatest value; among which I reckon that of the marquis de la Fayette.

I was glad to hear of your safe return to Paris, after so long and fatiguing a journey. That is the place where your enlightened zeal for the welfare of our country can employ itself most to our advantage, and I know it is always at work, and indefatigable. Our enemies are, as you observe, very industrious in depreciating our national character. Their abuse

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sometimes provokes me, and I am almost ready to retaliate; but I have held my hand, though there is abundant room for recrimination; because I would do nothing that might hasten another quarrel, by exasperating those who are still sore from their late disgraces. Perhaps it may be best that they should please themselves with fancying us weak, and poor, and divided, and friendless; they may then not be jealous of our growing strength, (which since the peace, does really make rapid progress) and may be less intent on interrupting it.

I do not wonder that the Germans, who know little of free constitutions, should be ready to suppose that such cannot support themselves. We think they may, and we hope to prove it. That there should be faults in our first sketches or plans of government is not surprising; rather, considering the times, and the circumstances under which they were formed, it is surprising that the faults are so few. Those in the general confederating articles, are now about to be considered in a convention called for that express purpose; these will indeed be the most difficult to rectify. Those of particular states will undoubtedly be rectified, as their inconveniences shall by experience be made manifest. And whatever difference of sentiment there may be among us respecting particular regulations, the enthusiastic rejoicings with which the day of declared independence is annually celebrated, demonstrate the universal satisfaction of the people with the revolution and its grand principles.

I inclose the vocabulary you sent me, with the words of the Shawanese, and Delaware languages, which colonel Harmar has procured for me. He is promised one more complete, which I shall send you as soon as it comes to my hands.

My grandson, whom you so kindly inquire after, is at his estate in the Jerseys, and amuses himself with cultivating his lands. I wish he would seriously make a business of it, and renounce all thoughts of public employment, for I think agriculture the most honorable because the most independent of all professions. But I believe he hankers a little after

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Paris, or some other of the polished cities of Europe, thinking the society there preferable to what he meets with in the woods of Ancocas; as it certainly is. If he was now here, he would undoubtedly join with me and the rest of my family (who are much flattered by your remembrance of them) in the best wishes for your health and prosperity, and that of your whole amiable fireside. You will allow an old friend of fourscore to say he *loves* your wife, when he adds and children, and prays God to bless them all.

Adieu! and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To M. l'Abbé Morellet,[k] *Paris.*

Philadelphia, April 22, 1787.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED, though long after they were written, your very agreeable favors of October 30, '85, and February 9, '86, with the pieces inclosed, productions of the Auteuil Academy of *belles lettres*. Your kind and friendly wishes and congratulations are extremely obliging. It gives me an infinite pleasure to find that I still retain a favorable place in the remembrance of the worthy and the good, whose delightful and instructive society I had the happiness of enjoying while I resided in France.

But though I could not leave that dear nation without regret, I certainly did right in coming home. I am here in my *niche* in my own house in the bosom of my family, my daughter and grand children all about me, among my old friends or the sons of my friends, who equally respect me; and who all speak and understand the same language with me; and you know that if a man desires to be useful by the exercise of his mental faculties, he loses half their force when in a foreign country, where he can only express himself in a language with which he is not well acquainted. In short I enjoy

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[k] Member of the French Academy.

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here every opportunity of doing good, and every thing else I could wish for, except repose; and that I may soon expect either by the cessation of my office, which cannot last more than three years, or by ceasing to live.

I am of the same opinion with you respecting the freedom of commerce, in countries especially where direct taxes are practicable. This will be our case in time, when our wide extended country fills up with inhabitants. But at present they are so widely settled, often five or six miles distant from one another in the back country, that the collection of a direct tax is almost impossible, the trouble of the collectors' going from house to house amounting to more than the value of the tax. Nothing can be better expressed than your sentiments are on this point, where you prefer liberty of trading, cultivating, manufacturing, &c., even to civil liberty, this being affected but rarely, the other every hour. Our debt occasioned by the war being heavy, we are under the necessity of using imposts and every method we can think of to assist in raising a revenue to discharge it; but in sentiment we are well disposed to abolish duties on importation as soon as we possibly can afford to do so.

Whatever may be reported by the English in Europe, you may be assured that our people are almost unanimous in being satisfied with the revolution. Their unbounded respect for all who were principally concerned in it, whether as warriors or statesmen, and the enthusiastic joy with which the day of the declaration of independence is every where annually celebrated, are indubitable proof of this truth. In one or two of the states there have been some discontents on partial and local subjects; these may have been fomented, as the accounts of them are exaggerated, by our ancient enemies; but they are now nearly suppressed, and the rest of the states enjoy peace and good order, and flourish amazingly. The crops have been good for several years past, the price of country produce high, from foreign demand, and it fetches ready money; rents are high in our towns, which increase fast by new buildings; laborers and artizans have high wages

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well paid, and vast tracts of new land are continually clearing and rendered fit for cultivation. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Jordain, London.

Philadelphia, May 18, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your very kind letter of February 27, together with the cask of porter you have been so good as to send me. We have here at present what the French call *une assemblée des notables*, a convention composed of some of the principal people from the several states of our confederation. They did me the honor of dining with me last Wednesday, when the cask was broached, and its contents met with the most cordial reception and universal approbation. In short the company agreed unanimously that it was the best porter they had ever tasted. Accept my thanks, a poor return, but all I can make at present.

Your letter reminds me of many happy days we have passed together, and the dear friends with whom we passed them; some of whom, alas! have left us, and we must regret their loss, although our Hawkesworth[l] is become an adventurer in more happy regions; and our Stanley[m] gone, "where only his own *harmony* can be exceeded." You give me joy in telling me that you are "on the pinnacle of *content*." Without it no situation can be happy; with it, any. One means of becoming content with one's situation, is the comparing it with a worse. Thus when I consider how many terrible diseases the human body is liable to, I comfort myself that only three incurable ones have fallen to my share, viz. the gout, the stone, and old age; and that these have not yet deprived me of my

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[l] John Hawkesworth, L. L. D. author of the Adventurer and compiler of the account of the Discoveries made in the South Seas, by captain Cook.

[m] John Stanley, an eminent musician and composer, though he became blind at the age of two years.

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natural cheerfulness, my delight in books, and enjoyment of social conversation.

I am glad to hear that Mr. Fitzmaurice is married, and has an amiable lady and children. It is a better plan than that he once proposed, of getting Mrs. Wright to make him a wax-work wife to sit at the head of his table. For after all, wedlock is the natural state of man. A bachelor is not a complete human being. He is like the odd half of a pair of scissars, which has not yet found its fellow, and therefore is not even half so useful as they might be together.

I hardly know which to admire most; the wonderful discoveries made by Herschel,[a] or the indefatigable ingenuity by which he has been enabled to make them. Let us hope, my friend, that when free from these bodily embarrassments, we may roam together through some of the systems he has explored, conducted by some of our old companions already acquainted with them. Hawkesworth will enliven our progress with his cheerful sensible converse, and Stanley accompany the music of the spheres.

Mr. Watraaugh tells, me, for I immediately inquired after her, that your daughter is alive and well. I remember her a most promising and beautiful child, and therefore do not wonder that she is grown, as he says, a fine woman.

God bless her and you, my dear friend, and every thing that pertains to you, is the sincere prayer of yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN,
In his 82d year.

To George Wheatley, Esq.

Philadelphia, May 18, 1787.

I RECEIVED duly my good old friend's letter of the 19th of February. I thank you much for your notes on banks, they are just and solid as far I can judge of them.

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[a] The astronomer.

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Our bank here has met with great opposition, partly from envy, and partly from those who wish an emission of more paper money, which they think the bank influence prevents. But it has stood all attacks, and went on well, notwithstanding the assembly repealed its charter. A new assembly has restored it; and the management is so prudent, that I have no doubt of its continuing to go on well: the dividend has never been less than six per cent, nor will that be augmented for some time, as the surplus profit is reserved to face accidents. The dividend of eleven per cent, which was once made, was from a circumstance scarce unavoidable. A new company was proposed; and prevented only by admitting a number of new partners. As many of the first set were averse to this and chose to withdraw, it was necessary to settle their accounts, so all were adjusted, the profits shared that had been accumulated, and the new and old proprietors jointly began on a new and equal footing. Their notes are always instantly paid on demand, and pass on all occasions as readily as silver, because they will always produce silver.

Your medallion is in good company, it is placed with those of lord Chatham, lord Camden, marquis of Rockingham, sir George Saville, and some others who honored me with a shew of friendly regard when in England. I believe I have thanked you for it, but I thank you again.

I believe with you, that if our plenipo. is desirous of concluding a treaty of commerce, he may need patience. If I were in his place, and not otherwise instructed, I should be apt to say "take your own time, gentlemen." If the treaty cannot be made as much to your advantage as to ours, don't make it. I am sure the want of it is not more to our disadvantage than to yours. Let the merchants on both sides treat with one another. *Laissez les faire.*

I have never considered attentively the congress's scheme for coining, and I have it not now at hand, so that at present I can say nothing to it. The chief uses of coining seem to be the ascertaining the fineness of the metals, and saving the time that would otherwise be spent in weighing to ascertain

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the quantity. But the convenience of fixed values to pieces is so great as to force the currency of some whose stamp is worn off, that should have assured their fineness, and which are evidently not of half their due weight: the case at present with the sixpences in England, which one with another do not weigh three-pence.

You are now 78 and I am 82; you tread fast upon my heels: but though you have more strength and spirit, you cannot come up with me till I stop, which must now be soon; for I am grown so old as to have buried most of the friends of my youth, and I now often hear persons, whom I knew when children, called *old* Mr. such-a-one, to distinguish them from their sons, now men grown and in business; so that by living twelve years beyond David's period, I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity, when I ought to have been a-bed and asleep. Yet had I gone at seventy, it would have cut off twelve of the most active years of my life, employed too in matters of the greatest importance; but whether I have been doing good or mischief is for time to discover. I only know that I intended well, and I hope all will end well.

Be so good as to present my affectionate respects to Dr. Riley. I am under great obligations to him, and shall write to him shortly. It will be a pleasure to him to know, that my malady does not grow sensibly worse, and that is a great point: for it has always been so tolerable, as not to prevent my enjoying the pleasures of society, and being cheerful in conversation; I owe this in a great measure to his good counsels.

Adieu my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To Count de Buffon, Paris.

Philadelphia, Nov. 19, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I AM honored by your letter, desiring to know by what means I am relieved in a disorder, with which you are so unfortunately afflicted. I have tried all the noted prescrip-

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tions for *diminishing* the stone, without perceiving any good effect. But observing temperance in eating, avoiding wine and cyder, and using daily the dumb bell, which exercises the upper part of the body without much moving the parts in contact with the stone, I think I have prevented its *increase*. As the roughness of the stone lacerates a little the neck of the bladder, I find that when the urine happens to be sharp, I have much pain in making water and frequent urgencies. For relief under this circumstance, I take, going to bed, the bigness of a pigeon's egg of jelly of blackberries: the receipt for making it is inclosed. While I continue to do this every night, I am generally easy the day following, making water pretty freely, and with long intervals. I wish most sincerely that this simple remedy may have the same happy effect with you. Perhaps currant jelly, or the jelly of apples, or of raspberries, may be equally serviceable; for I suspect the virtue of the jelly may lie principally in the boiled sugar which is in some degree candied by the boiling of the jelly.

Wishing you for your own sake much more ease, and for the sake of mankind many more years, I remain with the greatest esteem and respect, dear sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To * * *

Philadelphia, Dec. 15, 1787.

I HOPE the disorders in Brabant and Holland may be rectified without bloodshed. But I fear the impending war with the Turks, if not prevented by prudent negociation, may in its consequences involve great part of Europe. I confide however that France and England will preserve their present peace with each other, notwithstanding some contrary appearances: for I think that they have both of them *too much sense* to go to war without an important cause, as well as too *little money* at present.

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As to the projected conquest from Turkey, I apprehend, that if the emperor and empress would make some use of arithmetic, and calculate what annual revenues may be expected from the country they want, should they acquire it, and then offer the grand signior a hundred times that annual revenue, to be paid down for an amicable purchase of it, it would be his interest to accept the offer, as well as theirs to make it, rather than a war for it should take place; since a war to acquire that territory and to retain it, will cost both parties much more, perhaps ten times more, than such sum of purchase money. But the hope of glory and the ambition of princes are not subject to arithmetical calculation.

My best wishes attend you; being with great esteem, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To M. le Veillard, of Passy.

Philadelphia, Feb. 17, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of June 23, by Mr. Saugrain, and it is the last of yours that is come to my hands. As you have so much leisure, and love writing, I cannot think you have been so long silent; you who are so good as to love me, and who know how much pleasure your letters always afford me. I therefore rather suspect you may probably have written something too freely concerning public affairs, and that your letters may be arrested in your post office, and yourself lodged in the Bastile. You see I imagine any thing however extravagant rather than suppose, (as your letters too often do) that my friends forget me.

I find Mr. Saugrain to answer well the good character you give of him, and shall with pleasure render him any services in my power. He is now gone down the Ohio, to reconnoitre that country.

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I should have proceeded in the history you mention,[o] if I could well have avoided accepting the chair of president for this third and last year: to which I was again elected by the *unanimous* voice of council and general asembly in November. If I live to see this year expire I may enjoy some leisure, which I promise you to employ in the work you do me the honor to urge so earnestly.

I sent you with my last a copy of the new constitution proposed for the United States by the late general convention. I sent one also to our excellent friend the duke de la Rochefoucauld. I attended the business of the convention faithfully for four months. Inclosed you have the last speech I made in it.[p] Six states have already adopted the constitution, and there is now little doubt of its being accepted by a sufficient number to carry it into execution, if not immediately by the whole. It has however met with great opposition in some states, for we are at present a nation of politicians. And though there is a general dread of giving too much *power* to our *governors*, I think we are more in danger from too little obedience in the *governed*.

We shall, as you suppose, have imposts on trade, and custom-houses, not because other nations have them, but because we cannot at present do without them. We want to discharge our public debt occasioned by the late war. Direct taxes are not so easily levied on the scantily settled inhabitants of our wide extended country; and what is paid in the price of merchandise is less felt by the consumer, and less the cause of complaint. When we are out of debt we may leave our trade free, for our ordinary charges of government will not be great.

Where there is a free government, and the people make their own laws by their representatives, I see no injustice in

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[o] The Memoirs of his own Life, to the continuance of which all his friends, who knew the importance of such a History, wished him anxiously to apply.

[p] See Vol. V. p. 432 of this edition.

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their obliging one another to take their own paper money. It is no more so than compelling a man by law to take his own note. But it is unjust to pay strangers with such money against their will. The making of paper money, with such a sanction, is however a folly, since although you may by law oblige a citizen to take it for his goods, you cannot fix his prices; and his liberty of rating them as he pleases, which is the same thing as setting what value he pleases on your money, defeats your sanction.

I have been concerned to hear of the troubles in the internal government of the country I love;[a] and hope some good may come out of them; and that they may end without mischief.

In your letter to my grandson, you asked some questions that had an appearance as if you meditated a visit to us. Nothing in this world would give me greater pleasure, than to receive and embrace here the whole family. But it is too great an happiness to be expected. This family all join with me in best wishes of every felicity to you and yours; and I remain with an unalterable and great esteem and affection, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Editors of the Pennsylvania Gazette.

On the abuse of the Press.

MESSRS. HALL AND SELLERS,

I LATELY heard a remark, that on examination of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for fifty years, from its commencement, it appeared that during that long period, scarce one libellous piece had ever appeared in it. This generally chaste conduct of your paper is much to its reputation; for it has long been the opinion of sober judicious people, that nothing is more likely to endanger the liberty of the press, than the abuse of that liberty, by employing it in personal accusation, detrac-

[a] France.

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tion, and calumny. The excesses some of our papers have been guilty of in this particular, have set this state in a bad light abroad, as appears by the following letter, which I wish you to publish, not merely to show your own disapprobation of the practice, but as a caution to others of the profession throughout the United States. For I have seen an European newspaper, in which the editor, who had been charged with frequently calumniating the Americans, justifies himself by saying, "that he had published nothing disgraceful to us, which he had not taken from our own printed papers."

I am, &c.

A. B.

New York, March 30, 1788.

DEAR FRIEND,

MY gout has at length left me, after five months' painful confinement. It afforded me however the leisure to read, or hear read, all the packets of your newspapers which you so kindly sent for my amusement.

Mrs. W. has partaken of it; she likes to read the advertisements; but she remarks some kind of *inconsistency* in the announcing so many diversons for almost every evening in the week, and such quantities to be sold of expensive superfluities, fineries, and luxuries *just imported*, in a country, that at the same time fills its papers with complaints of *hard times*, and want of money. I tell her that such complaints are common to all times and all countries, and were made even in Solomon's time; when, as we are told, silver was as plenty in Jerusalem as the stones in the street, and yet even then, there were people that grumbled, so as to incur this censure from that knowing prince. *Say not thou that the former times were better than these; for thou dost not inquire rightly concerning that matter.*

But the *inconsistence* that strikes me the most is that between the name of your city, *Philadelphia, brotherly love*, and the spirit of rancour, malice and *hatred* that breathes in its newspapers. For I learn from those papers, that your

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state is divided into parties, that each ascribes all the public operations of the other to vicious motives; that they do not even suspect one another of the smallest degree of honesty; that the anti-federalists are such, merely from the fear of losing power, places, or emoluments which they have in possession or in expectation; that the federalists are a set of *conspirators*, who aim at establishing a tyranny over the persons and property of their countrymen, and to live in splendor on the plunder of the people. I learn too that your justices of the peace, though chosen by their neighbors, make a villainous trade of their office, and promote discord to augment fees, and fleece their electors; and that this would not be mended by placing the choice in the executive council, who with interested or party views are continually making as improper appointments; witness a "*petty fiddler, sycophant, and scoundrel*" appointed judge of the Admiralty; "*an old woman and fomenter of sedition*" to be another of the Judges, and "*a Jeffries*" chief justice, &c. &c.; with "*two harpies*" the comptroller and naval officers to prey upon the merchants and deprive them of their property by force of arms, &c. I am informed also by these papers, that your general assembly, though the annual choice of the people, shows no regard to their rights, but from sinister views or ignorance makes laws in direct violation of the constitution, to divest the inhabitants of their property, and give it to strangers and intruders; and that the council either fearing the resentment of their constituents, or plotting to enslave them, had projected to disarm them, and given orders for that purpose; and finally, that your president, the unanimous joint choice of the council and assembly, is "*an old rogue*," who gave his assent to the federal constitution, merely to avoid refunding money he had purloined from the United States. There is indeed a good deal of manifest *inconsistency* in all this, and yet a stranger seeing it in your own prints, though he does not believe it all, may probably believe enough of it to conclude that Pennsylvania is peopled by a set of the most unprincipled, wicked, rascally, and quarrelsome scoundrels upon the face of the

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globe. I have sometimes indeed suspected, that those papers are the manufacture of foreign enemies among you, who write with a view of disgracing your country, and making you appear contemptible and detestable all the world over: but then I wonder at the indiscretion of your printers in publishing such writings! There is however one of your *inconsistencies* that consoles me a little, which is, that though *living* you give one another the characters of devils; *dead* you are all angels! It is delightful when any of you die, to read what good husbands, good fathers, good friends, good citizens, and good christians you were, concluding with a scrap of poetry that places you, with certainty, every one in heaven. So that I think Pennsylvania a good country *to die in*, though a very bad one to live in.

To M. le Veillard.

Philadelphia, April 22, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED but a few days since your favor of November 30, 1787, in which you continue to urge me to finish the Memoirs. My three years of service will expire in October, when a new president must be chosen; and I had the project of retiring then to my grandson's villa in New Jersey, where I might be free from the interruption of visits, in order to complete that work for your satisfaction; for in this city my time is so cut to pieces by friends and strangers, that I have sometimes envied the prisoners in the Bastile: but considering now the little remnant of life I have left, the accidents that may happen between this and October, and your earnest desire, I have come to a resolution to proceed in that work to morrow and continue it daily till finished, which if my health permits, may be in the course of the ensuing summer. As it goes on I will have a copy made for you, and you may expect to receive a part by the next packet.

It is very possible, as you suppose, that all the articles of the proposed new government will not remain unchanged

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after the first meeting of the congress. I am of opinion with you, that the *two* chambers were not necessary, and I disliked some other articles that are in, and wished for some that are not in the proposed plan; I nevertheless hope it may be adopted, though I should have nothing to do with the execution of it, being determined to quit all public business with my present employment. At 83 one certainly has a right to *ambition* repose.

We are not ignorant, that the duties paid at the custom-house on the importation of foreign goods are finally reimbursed by the consumer, but we impose them as the easiest way of levying a tax from those consumers. If our new country was as closely inhabited as your old one, we might without much difficulty collect a land-tax, that would be sufficient for all purposes: but where farms are at five or six miles distant from each other, as they are in a great part of our country, the going of the collectors from house to house to demand the taxes, and being obliged to call more than once for the same tax, makes the trouble of collecting, in many cases exceed the value of the sum collected. Things that are practicable in one country are not always so in another, where circumstances differ. Our duties are however generally so small as to give little temptation to smuggling.

Believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN

To Madame Lavoisier.

Philadelphia, Oct. 23, 1788.

I HAVE a long time been disabled from writing to my dear friend, by a severe fit of the gout, or I should sooner have returned my thanks for her very kind present of the portrait, which she has herself done me the honor to make of me. It is allowed by those who have seen it to have great merit as a picture in every respect; but what particularly endears it to me is the hand that drew it. Our English enemies when they were in possession of this city and my house,

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made a prisoner of my portrait, and carried it off with them, leaving that of its companion, my wife, by itself, a kind of widow. You have replaced the husband, and the lady seems to smile as well pleased.

It is true, as you observe, that I enjoy here every thing that a reasonable mind can desire, a sufficiency of income, a comfortable habitation of my own building, having all the conveniences I could imagine; a dutiful affectionate daughter to nurse and take care of me, a number of promising grand children, some old friends still remaining to converse with, and more respect, distinction, and public honors than I can possibly merit; these are the blessings of God, and depend on his continued goodness: yet all do not make me forget Paris and the nine years' happiness I enjoyed there, in the sweet society of people whose conversation is instructive, whose manners are highly pleasing, and who above all the nations of the world, have in the greatest perfection the art of making themselves beloved by strangers. And now, even in my sleep, I find, that the scenes of all my pleasant dreams are laid in that city, or in its neighborhood.

I like much young M. Dupont. He appears a very sensible and valuable man, and I think his father will have a great deal of satisfaction in him.

Please present my thanks to M. Lavoisier for the *Nomenclature Chimique* he has been so good as to send me, (it must be a useful book) and assure him of my great and sincere esteem and attachment. My best wishes attend you both, and I think I cannot wish you and him greater happiness than a long continuance of the connection.

With great regard and affection, I have the honor to be, my dear friend, your most obliged and most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Dr. Ingenhauz.

October 24, 1788.

YOU have always been kind enough to interest yourself in what relates to my health: I ought therefore to acquaint you with what appears to me something curious respecting it: you may remember the cutaneous malady, I formerly complained of, and for which you and Dr. Pringle favored me with prescriptions and advice. It vexed me near fourteen years, and was, the beginning of this year, as bad as ever, covering almost my whole body except my face and hands: when a fit of the gout came on, without very much pain, but a swelling in both feet, which at last appeared also in both knees; and then in my hands. As these swellings increased and extended, the other malady diminished, and at length disappeared entirely. Those swellings have some time since begun to fall, and are now almost gone; perhaps the cutaneous may return, or perhaps it is worn out. I may hereafter let you know what happens. I am on the whole much weaker than when it began to leave me. But possibly that may be the effect of age, for I am now near 83, the age of commencing decrepitude.

I grieve at the wars Europe is engaged in, and wish they were ended; for I fear even the victors will be the losers.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. Our public affairs are drawing towards a settlement. I have served out the three years term of my presidentship, limited by the constitution; and being determined to engage no more in public business, I hope if health permits, to be a better correspondent. We have no philosophical news here at present, except that a boat moved by a steam engine, rows itself against tide in our river, and it is apprehended the construction may be so simplified and improved as to become generally useful.

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To B. Vaughan, Esq.

October 24, 1788.

HAVING now finished my term in the presidentship, and resolving to engage no more in public affairs, I hope to be a better correspondent for the little time I have to live. I am recovering from a long continued gout, and am diligently employed in writing the History of my Life, to the doing of which the persuasions contained in your letter of January 31, 1783,[r] have not a little contributed. I am now in the year 1756, just before I was sent to England. To shorten the work, as well as for other reasons, I omit all facts and transactions that may not have a tendency to benefit the young reader, by showing him from my example, and my success in emerging from poverty, and acquiring some degree of wealth, power, and reputation, the advantages of certain modes of conduct which I observed, and of avoiding the errors which were prejudicial to me. If a writer can judge properly of his own work, I fancy on reading over what is already done, that the book may be found entertaining, interesting, and useful, more so than I expected when I began it. If my present state of health continues, I hope to finish it this winter: when done you shall have a manuscript copy of it, that I may obtain from your judgment and friendship, such remarks as may contribute to its improvement.

The violence of our party debates about the new constitution seems much abated, indeed almost extinct, and we are getting fast into good order. I kept out of those disputes pretty well, having wrote only one piece, which I send you inclosed.

I regret the immense quantity of misery brought upon mankind by this Turkish war; and I am afraid the king of Sweden may burn his fingers by attacking Russia. When will princes learn arithmetic enough to calculate, if they want pieces of one another's territory, how much cheaper it would

[r] See Memoirs of the Life. Vol. I.

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be to buy them, than to make war for them, even though they were to give an hundred years purchase? but if glory cannot be valued, and therefore the wars for it cannot be subject to arithmetical calculation, so as to show their advantages or disadvantage; at least wars for trade, which have gain for their object, may be proper subjects for such computation; and a trading nation as well as a single trader ought to calculate the probabilities of profit and loss, before engaging in any considerable adventure. This however nations seldom do, and we have had frequent instances of their spending more money in wars for acquiring or securing branches of commerce, than an hundred years' profit or the full enjoyment of them can compensate.

Remember me affectionately to good Dr. Price and to the honest heretic Dr. Priestly. I do not call him *honest* by way of distinction; for I think all the heretics I have known have been virtuous men. They have the virtue of fortitude, or they would not venture to own their heresy; and they cannot afford to be deficient in any of the other virtues, as that would give advantage to their many enemies; and they have not like orthodox sinners, such a number of friends to excuse or justify them. Do not, however, mistake me. It is not to my good friend's heresy that I impute his honesty. On the contrary, 'tis his honesty that has brought upon him the character of heretic.

I am ever, my dear friend, yo rs sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Partridge.

Philadelphia, Nov. 25, 1788.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 12th instant, inclosing one for Mr. Philip Vanhorn, physician in Philadelphia, which you desired me to deliver and to solicit the forgiveness of his daughter. I immediately made inquiry for him, as to be instrumental in so charitable a work, and in concurrence with you, would have given me great pleasure: but I

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am assured by our oldest inhabitants, who have had most acquaintance and best opportunities of knowing their fellow-citizens, particularly some of our physicians, that no physician or other person of that name has ever been a resident here: so that there must have been some mistake in the information that has been given you, if indeed the whole story is not an imposition.

You kindly inquire after my health; I have not of late much reason to boast of it. People that will live a long life and drink to the bottom of the cup must expect to meet with some of the dregs. However, when I consider how many more terrible maladies the human body is liable to, I think myself well off that I have only three incurable ones, the gout, the stone, and old age. And those notwithstanding, I enjoy many comfortable intervals in which I forget all my ills, and amuse myself in reading or writing, or in conversation with friends, joking, laughing, and telling merry stories, as when you first knew me, a young man about fifty.

My children and grandchildren, the Baches, are all well and pleased with your remembrance of them. They are my family, living in my house, and we have lately the addition of a little good-natured girl, whom I begin to love as well as the rest.

You tell me our poor friend, Ben Kent is gone, I hope to the regions of the blessed; or at least to some place where souls are prepared for those regions! I found my hope on this, that though not so orthodox as you and I, he was an honest man, and had his virtues. If he had any hypocrisy, it was of that inverted kind, with which a man is not so bad as he seems to be. And with regard to future bliss, I cannot help imagining that multitudes of the zealously orthodox of different sects, who at the last day may flock together, in hopes of seeing each other damned, will be disappointed, and obliged to rest content with their own salvation.

You have no occasion to apologize for your former letter. It was, as all yours are, very well written. That which is inclosed for your cousin came too late, he being sailed.

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By one of the accidents which war occasions, all my books containing copies of my letters were lost. There were eight volumes, and I have been able to recover only two. Those are of later date than the transaction you mention, and therefore can contain nothing relating to it. If the letter you want a copy of, was one in which I consoled my brother's friends, by a comparison drawn from a party of pleasure intended into the country, where we were all to meet, though the chair of one being soonest ready, he set out before the rest: I say if this was the letter, I fancy you may possibly find it in Boston, as I remember Dr. Billis once wrote me that many copies had been taken of it.

I too should have been glad to have seen that again, among others I have written to him and you. But you inform me they were devoured by the mice, poor little innocent creatures, I am very sorry they had no better food. But since they like my letters, here is another treat for them.

Adieu, *ma chere enfant*, and believe me ever, your affectionate uncle,

B. FRANKLIN.

My respects to Mr. Partridge, and Sarah your daughter.

To Mrs. Mecom, Boston.[a]

Philadelphia, Nov. 26, 1788.

I NEVER see any Boston newspapers. You mention there being often something in them to do me honor. I am obliged to them. On the other hand, some of our papers here are endeavoring to disgrace me. I have long been accustomed to receive more blame as well as more praise than I have deserved. 'Tis the lot of every public man. And I leave one account to balance the other.

As you observe, there was no *d——n your souls* in the story of the poker when I told it. The late dresser of it was probably the same, or perhaps of kin to him, who in relating

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[a] Dr. Franklin's sister.

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a dispute that happened between queen Anne and the archbishop of Canterbury concerning a vacant mitre, which the queen was for bestowing on a person the archbishop thought unworthy, made both the queen and the archbishop swear three or four thumping oaths in every sentence of the discussion; and the archbishop at last gained his point. One present at the tale being surprised, said, But did the queen and the archbishop swear so at one another? O! no, no, said the relator; that is only my way of telling the story. Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Small.

Philadelphia, Feb. 17, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE just received your kind letter of Nov. 29, and am much obliged by your friendly attention in sending me a receipt, which on occasion I may make trial of; but the stone I have being a large one, as I find by the weight it falls with when I turn in bed, I have no hope of its being dissoluble by any medicine; and having been for some time past pretty free from pain, I am afraid of tampering. I congratulate you on the escape you had by voiding the one you mention, that was as big as a kidney bean; had it been retained it might soon have become too large to pass, and proved the cause of much pain at times, as mine has been to me.

Having served my time of three years as president, I have now renounced all public business, and enjoy the *otium cum dignitate*. My friends indulge me with their frequent visits, which I have now leisure to receive and enjoy. The Philosophical Society, and the Society for political Inquiries meet at my house, which I have enlarged by an additional building, that affords me a large room for those meetings, another over it for my library, now very considerable, and over all some lodging rooms. I have seven promising grand-children by my daughter, who play with and amuse me, and she is a kind attentive nurse to me, when I am any time indisposed;

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so that I pass my time as agreeably as at my age (83) a man may well expect, and have little to wish for, except a more easy exit than my malady seems to threaten,

The deafness you complain of gives me concern, as if great it must diminish considerably your pleasure in conversation. If moderate you may remedy it easily and readily by putting your thumb and fingers behind your ear, pressing it outwards, and enlarging it as it were with the hollow of your hand. By an exact experiment I found that I could hear the tick of a watch at forty-five feet distance by this means, which was barely audible at twenty-feet without it. The experiment was made at midnight when the house was still.

I am glad you have sent those directions respecting ventilation to the Edinburgh Society. I hope you have added an account of the experience you had of it at Minorca. If they do not print your paper, send it to me, and it shall be in the third volume, which we are about to publish, of our transactions.

Mrs. Hewson joins with us in best wishes for your health and happiness. Her eldest son has gone through his studies at our college, and takes his degree. The youngest is still there, and will be graduated this summer.

My grandson presents his respects; and I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

You never mention the receipt of any letters from me. I wish to know if they come to hand, particularly my last inclosing the *apologue*. You mention some of my old friends being dead, but not their names.

To Mrs. Greene.

Philadelphia, March 2, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING now done with public affairs, which have hitherto taken up so much of my time, I shall endeavor to enjoy during the small remainder of life that is left to me some of

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the pleasures of conversing with my old friends by writing, since their distance prevents my hope of seeing them again.

I received one of the bags of sweet corn you was so good as to send me a long time since, but the other never came to hand; even the letter mentioning it, though dated December 10, 1787, has been above a year on its way, for I received it but about two weeks since from Baltimore in Maryland. The corn I did receive was excellent, and gave me great pleasure. Accept my hearty thanks.

I am, as you suppose in the above mentioned old letter, much pleased to hear that my young friend Ray is "smart in the farming way," and makes such substantial fences. I think agriculture the most honorable of all employments, being the most independent. The farmer has no need of popular favor, nor the favor of the great. The success of his crops depending only on the blessing of God upon his honest industry. I congratulate your good spouse, that he as well as myself is now free from public cares, and that he can bend his whole attention to his farming, which will afford him both profit and pleasure; a business which nobody knows better how to manage with advantage. I am too old to follow printing again myself, but loving the business, I have brought up my grandson Benjamin to it, and have built and furnished a printing house for him, which he now manages under my eye. I have great pleasure in the rest of my grandchildren, who are now in number eight and all promising, the youngest only six months old, but shows signs of great good nature. My friends here are numerous, and I enjoy as much of their conversation as I can reasonably wish; and I have as much health and cheerfulness as can well be expected at my age, now eighty-three. Hitherto this long life has been tolerably happy, so that if I were allowed to live it over again, I should make no objection, only wishing for leave to do, what authors do in a second edition of their works, correct some of my errata. Among the felicities of my life I reckon your

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friendship, which I shall remember with pleasure as long as that life lasts, being ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Miss Catherine Louisa Shipley.

Philadelphia, April 27, 1789.

IT is only a few days, since the kind letter of my dear young friend, dated December 24, came to my hands. I had before in the public papers met with the afflicting news that letter contained. That excellent man has then left us!—his departure is a loss not to his family and friends only, but to his nation, and to the world: for he was intent on doing good, had wisdom to devise the means, and talents to promote them. His sermon before the society for propagating the gospel, and "*his speech intended to be spoken,*" are proofs of his ability as well as his humanity. Had his counsels in those pieces been attended to by the ministers, how much bloodshed might have been prevented, and how much expense and disgrace to the nation avoided!

Your reflections on the constant calmness and composure attending his death are very sensible. Such instances seem to show, that the good sometimes enjoy in dying a foretaste of the happy state they are about to enter.

According to the course of years, I should have quitted this world long before him: I shall however not be long in following. I am now in my eighty-fourth year, and the last year has considerably enfeebled me; so that I hardly expect to remain another. You will then, my dear friend, consider this as probably the last line to be received from me, and as a taking leave.

Present my best and most sincere respects to your good mother, and love to the rest of the family, to whom I wish all happiness; and believe me to be, while I *do* live, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the Rev. Dr. Price.

Philadelphia, May 31, 1789.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I LATELY received your kind letter, inclosing one from Miss Kitty Shipley, informing me of the good bishop's decease, which afflicted me greatly. My friends drop off one after another, when my age and infirmities prevent my making new ones, and if I still retained the necessary activity and ability, I hardly see among the existing generation where I could make them of equal goodness. So that the longer I live I must expect to be the more wretched. As we draw nearer the conclusion of life, nature furnishes with more helps to wean us from it, among which one of the most powerful is the loss of such dear friends.

I send you with this the two volumes of our transactions, as I forget whether you had the first before. If you had, you will please to give this to the French ambassador, requesting his conveyance of it to the good duke de la Rochefoucauld.

My best wishes attend you, being ever with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To B. Vaughan, Esq.

Philadelphia, June 3, 1789.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of March 4, and wish I may be able to complete what you so earnestly desire, the memoirs of my life. But of late I am so interrupted by extreme pain, which obliges me to have recourse to opium, that between the effects of both, I have but little time in which I can write any thing. My grandson however is copying what is done, which will be sent to you for your opinion by the next vessel; and not merely for your opinion but for your advice; for I find it a difficult task to speak decently and properly of one's own conduct; and I feel the want of a judicious friend to encourage me in scratching out.

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I have condoled sincerely with the bishop of St. Asaph's family. He was an excellent man. Losing our friends thus one by one, is the tax we pay for long living; and it is indeed a heavy one!

I have not seen the king of Prussia's posthumous works; what you mention makes me desirous to have them. Please to mention it to your brother William, and that I request he would add them to the books I have desired him to buy for me.

Our new government is now in train, and seems to promise well. But events are in the hand of God! I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Wright, London.

Philadelphia, Nov. 4, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of July the 31st, which gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of the welfare both of yourself and your good lady, to whom please to present my respects. I thank you for the epistle of your yearly meeting, and for the card (a specimen of printing) which was inclosed.

We have now had one session of congress, which was conducted under our new constitution, and with as much general satisfaction as could reasonably be expected. I wish the struggle in France may end as happily for that nation. We are now in the full enjoyment of our new government for *eleven* of the states, and it is generally thought that North Carolina is about to join it. Rhode Island will probably take longer time for consideration.—We have had a most plentiful year for the fruits of the earth, and our people seem to be recovering fast from the extravagance and idle habits which the war had introduced; and to engage seriously in the contrary habits, of temperance, frugality, and industry, which give the most pleasing prospect of future national felicity. Your

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merchants however, are I think imprudent in crowding in upon us such quantities of goods for sale here, which are not written for by ours, and are beyond the faculties of this country to consume, in any reasonable time. This surplus of goods is therefore to raise present money, sent to the vendues, or auction houses, of which we have six or seven in and near this city; where they are sold frequently for less than prime cost, to the great loss of the indiscreet adventurers. Our newspapers are doubtless to be seen at your coffee-houses near the exchange: in their advertisements you may observe the constancy and quantity of these kind of sales; as well as the quantity of goods imported by our regular traders. I see in your English newspapers frequent mention of our being out of credit with you; to us it appears that we have abundantly too much, and that your exporting merchants are rather out of their senses.

I wish success to your endeavors for obtaining an abolition of the slave trade. The epistle from your yearly meeting for the year 1758, was not the *first sowing* of the good seed you mention; for I find by an old pamphlet in my possession, that George Keith, near an hundred years since, wrote a paper against the practice, said to be "given forth by the appointment of the meeting held by him, at Philip James's house in the city of Philadelphia, about the year 1693; wherein a strict charge was given to friends, "that they should set their negroes at liberty after some reasonable time of service, &c. &c." And about the year 1728, or '29, I myself printed a book for Ralph Sandyford, another of your friends of this city, against keeping negroes in slavery; two editions of which he distributed gratis. And about the year 1736 I printed another book on the same subject for Benjamin Lay, who also professed being one of your friends, and he distributed the books chiefly among them. By these instances it appears that the seed was indeed sown in the good ground of your profession, (though much earlier than the time you mention) and its springing up to effect at last, though so late, is some confirmation of lord Bacon's obser-

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vation, that *a good motion never dies;* and may encourage us in making such; though hopeless of their taking immediate effect.

I doubt whether I shall be able to finish my memoirs, and if I finish them whether they will be proper for publication: you seem to have too high an opinion of them, and to expect too much from them.

I think you are right in preferring a mixed form of government for your country, under its present circumstances; and if it were possible for you to reduce the enormous salaries and emoluments of great offices (which are at bottom the source of all your violent factions) that form might be conducted more quietly and happily: but I am afraid that none of your factions, when they get uppermost, will ever have virtue enough to reduce those salaries and emoluments, but will rather choose to enjoy them.

I am, my dear friend, yours very affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Rush.

Philadelphia,

[without date, but supposed to be in 1789.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

DURING our long acquaintance you have shown many instances of your regard for me, yet I must now desire you to add one more to the number, which is, that if you publish your ingenious discourse on the *moral sense,* you will totally omit and suppress that most extravagant encomium on your friend Franklin, which hurt me exceedingly in the unexpected hearing, and will mortify me beyond conception, if it should appear from the press.

Confiding in your compliance with this earnest request, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Samuel More, Esq.

Philadelphia, Nov. 5, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your favor of July 25, but had no opportunity of showing any civility to the bearer whom you mention as coming under the auspices of William Franklin, esq., as he did not show himself to me.

I am obliged by your kind inquiries after my health, which is still tolerably good, the stone excepted; my constitution being such as, if it were not for that malady, might have held out yet some years longer.

I hope the fire of liberty which you mention as spreading itself over Europe, will act upon the inestimable rights of man, as common fire does upon gold, purify without destroying them; so that a lover of liberty may find *a country* in any part of Christendom!

I see with pleasure in the public prints, that our society[t] is still kept up and flourishes. I was an early member; for when Mr. Shipley sent me a list of the subscribers, they were but seventy; and though I had no expectation then of ever going to England, and acting with them, I sent a contribution of twenty guineas; in consideration of which the society were afterwards pleased to consider me a member.

I wish to the exertions of your manufacturers, who are generally excellent; and to the spirit and enterprise of your merchants, who are famed for fair and honorable dealing, all the success they merit in promoting the prosperity of your country.

I am glad our friend Small enjoys so much health, and his faculties so perfectly, as I perceive he does by his letters. I know not whether he is yet returned from his visit to Scotland, and therefore give you the trouble of the inclosed.

My best wishes attend you, being ever, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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[t] The London Society for promoting Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, of which Mr. More was secretary.

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To Mr. Small.

Philadelphia, Nov. 5, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your several favors of April 28, May 9, and June 2, together with the manuscript concerning ventilation, which will be inserted in our next volume.

I have long been of your opinion, that your legal provision for the poor is a very great evil, operating as it does to the encouragement of idleness. We have followed your example, and begin now to see our error; and I hope shall reform it.—I find by your letters that every man has patience enough to bear calmly and coolly the injuries done to other people: you have perfectly forgiven the royalists, and you seem to wonder that we should still retain any resentment against them for their joining with the savages to burn our houses, and murder and scalp our friends, our wives, and our children. I forget who it was that said, "we are commanded to forgive our enemies, but we are no where commanded to forgive our friends;" certain it is however that atrocious injuries done to us by our friends are naturally more deeply resented than the same done by enemies. They have left us to live under the government of their king in England and Nova Scotia. We do not miss them, nor wish their return; nor do we envy them their present happiness.—The accounts you give me of the great prospects you have respecting your manufactures, agriculture, and commerce, are pleasing to me, for I still love England and wish it prosperity.

You tell me that the government of France is abundantly punished for its treachery to England in assisting us; you might also have remarked that the government of England had been punished for its treachery to France, in assisting the Corsicans, and in seizing her ships in time of full peace, without any previous declaration of war. I believe governments are pretty near equal in honesty, and cannot with much propriety praise their own in preference to that of their neighbors.

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You do me too much honor in naming me with *Timoleon*. I am like him only in retiring from my public labors, which indeed my stone, and other infirmities of age, have made indispensably necessary.

I hope you are by this time returned from your visit to your native country, and that the journey has given a firmer consistence to your health.

Mr. Penn's property in this country, which you inquire about, is still immensely great; and I understand he has received ample compensation in England for the part he lost.

I think you have made a happy choice of rural amusements; the protection of the bees, and the destruction of the hop insect. I wish success to your experiments, and shall be glad to hear the result. Your theory of insects appears the most ingenious and plausible of any that have hitherto been proposed by philosophers.

Our new constitution is now established with *eleven* states, and the accession of a twelfth is soon expected. We have had one session of congress under it, which was conducted with remarkable prudence, and a good deal of unanimity. Our late harvests were plentiful, and our produce still fetches a good price, through an abundant foreign demand, and the flourishing state of our commerce.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Le Roy, of Paris.

Philadelphia, Nov. 13, 1789.

'TIS now more than a year since I have heard from my dear friend Le Roy. What can be the reason? Are you still living? or have the mob of Paris mistaken the head of a monopoliser of knowledge, for a monopoliser of corn, and paraded it about the streets upon a pole?

Great part of the news we have had from Paris, for near a year past, has been very afflicting. I sincerely wish and pray

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it may all end well and happily both for the king and the nation. The voice of *Philosophy*, I appprehend, can hardly be heard among those tumults. If any thing material in that way had occurred, I am persuaded you would have acquainted me with it. However pray let me hear from you a little oftener; for though the distance is great, and the means of conveying letters not very regular, a year's silence between friends must needs give uneasiness.

Our new constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes!

My health continues much as it has been for some time, except that I grow thinner and weaker, so that I cannot expect to hold out much longer.

My respects to your good brother, and to our friends of the academy, which always has my best wishes for its prosperity and glory. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To David Hartley, Esq.

Philadelphia, Dec. 4, 1789.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your favor of August last. Your kind condolences, on the painful state of my health, are very obliging. I am thankful to God, however, that among the numerous ills human life is subject to, one only of any importance is fallen to my lot; and that so late as almost to insure that it can be but of short duration.

The convulsions in France are attended with some disagreeable circumstances; but if by the struggle she obtains and secures for the nation its future liberty, and a good constitution, a few years enjoyment of those blessings will amply repair all the damages their acquisition may have occasioned. God grant that not only the love of liberty, but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man, may pervade all

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the nations of the earth, so that a philosopher may set his foot any where on its surface, and say, this is my country! Your wishes for a cordial and perpetual friendship between Britain and her ancient colonies, are manifested continually in every one of your letters to me; something of my disposition on the same subject may appear to you in casting your eye over the inclosed paper.[a] I do not by this opportunity send you any of our Gazettes; because the postage from Liverpool would be more than they are worth. I can only add my best wishes of every kind of felicity for the three Hartleys, to whom I have the honor of being an affectionate friend and most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Mecom, Boston.

Philadelphia, Dec. 17, 1789.

DEAR SISTER,

YOU tell me you are desired by an acquaintance to ask my opinion, whether the general circumstances, mentioned in the history of Baron Trenck, are founded in fact; to which I can only answer, that of the greatest part of those circumstances, the scene being laid in Germany, I must consequently be very ignorant; but of what he says, as having passed in France, between the ministers of that country, himself, and me, I can speak positively that it is *founded in falsehood*, and that the fact can only serve to *con*found, as I never saw him in that country, nor ever knew or heard of him any where, till I met with the abovementioned history in print, in the German language, in which he ventured to relate it as a fact, that I had, with those ministers, solicited him to enter into the American service. A translation of that book into French has since been printed, but the translator has omitted that pretended fact, probably from an apprehension that its being in that country known not to be true, might hurt the credit and sale of the translation.

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[a] Uncertain what paper.

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I thank you for the sermon on sacred music, I have read it with pleasure. I think it a very ingenious composition. You will say this is natural enough, if you read what I have formerly written on the same subject, in one of my printed letters, wherein you will find a perfect agreement of sentiment respecting the complex music; of late, in my opinion, too much in vogue; it being only pleasing to learned ears who can be delighted with the difficulty of execution instead of harmony and melody.

Your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Noah Webster, Esq.

Philadelphia, Dec. 26, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED some time since your "*Dissertations on the Eng h Language.*" The book was not accompanied by any letter or message, informing me to whom I am obliged for it, but I suppose it is to yourself. It is an excellent work, and will be greatly useful in t rning the thoughts of our countrymen to correct writing. Please to accept my thanks for the great honor you have done me in its dedication. I ought to have made this acknowledgment sooner, but much indisposition prevented me.

I cannot but applaud your zeal for preserving the purity of our language, both in its expressions and pronunciation, and in correcting the popular errors several of our states are continually falling into with respect to both. Give me leave to mention some of them, though possibly they may have already occurred to you. I wish however in some future publication of yours you would set a discountenancing mark upon them. The first I remember is the word *improved*. When I left New England in the year 1723, this word had never been used among us, as far as I know, but in the sense of *ameliorated*, or made better, except once in a very old book of Dr. Mather's, entitled "*Remarkable Providences.*" As that emi-

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nent man wrote a very obscure hand, I remember that when I read that word in his book, used instead of the word *employed*, I conjectured it was an error of the printer, who had mistaken a too short *l* in the writing for an *r*, and a *y*, with too short a tail for a *v*; whereby *employed* was converted into *improved*. But when I returned to Boston, in 1733, I found this change had obtained favor, and was then become common; for I met with it often in perusing the newspapers, where it frequently made an appearance rather ridiculous. Such for instance as the advertisement of a country house to be sold, which had been many years *improved* as a tavern; and in the character of a deceased country-gentleman, that he had been for more than thirty years *improved* as a justice of the peace. This use of the word *improved* is peculiar to New England, and not to be met with among any other speakers of English, either on this or the other side of the water.

During my late absence in France, I find that several other new words have been introduced into our parliamentary language; for example, I find a verb formed from the substantive *notice: I should not have* NOTICED *this, were it not that the gentleman*, &c. Also another verb from the substantive *advocate, the gentleman who* ADVOCATES *or has* ADVOCATED *that motion*, &c.[v] Another from the substantive *progress*, the most awkward and abominable of the three, *the committee having* PROGRESSED *resolved to adjourn*. The word *opposed*, though not a new word, I find used in a new manner, as, *the gentleman who are* OPPOSED *to this measure;—to which I have also myself always been* OPPOSED. If you should happen to be of my opinion with respect to these innovations, you will use your authority in reprobating them.

The Latin language, long the vehicle used in distributing knowledge among the different nations of Europe, is daily more and more neglected; and one of the modern tongues,

[v] Both these verbs are now in general use, and by the best writers; they perfectly accord with the genius of the language.

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viz. the French, seems in point of universality to have supplied its place; it is spoken in all the courts of Europe; and most of the literati, those even who do not speak it, have acquired knowledge enough of it to enable them easily to read the books that are written in it. This gives a considerable advantage to that nation; it enables its authors to inculcate and spread throughout other nations such sentiments and opinions on important points as are most conducive to its interests, or which may contribute to its reputation, by promoting the common interests of mankind. It is perhaps owing to its being written in French, that Voltaire's Treatise on Toleration has had so sudden and so great an effect on the bigotry of Europe, as almost entirely to disarm it. The general use of the French language, has likewise a very advantageous effect on the profits of the bookselling branch of commerce, it being well known, that the more copies can be sold that are struck off from one composition of types, the profits increase in a much greater proportion than they do in making a great number of pieces in any other kind of manufacture. And at present there is no capital town in Europe without a French bookseller's shop corresponding with Paris. Our English bids fair to obtain the second place. The great body of excellent printed sermons in our language, and the freedom of our writings on political subjects, have induced a number of divines of different sects and nations, as well as gentlemen concerned in public affairs, to study it; so far at least as to read it. And if we were to endeavor the facilitating its progress, the study of our tongue might become much more general. Those who have employed some parts of their time in learning a new language, have frequently observed, that while their acquaintance with it was imperfect, difficulties small in themselves operated as great ones in obstructing their progress. A book, for example, ill printed, or a pronunciation in speaking, not well articulated, would render a sentence unintelligible; which from a clear print or a distinct speaker would have been immediately comprehended. If therefore we would have the benefit of seeing our language

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more generally known among mankind, we should endeavor to remove all the difficulties, however small, that discourage the learning it. But I am sorry to observe that of late years those difficulties, instead of being diminished have been augmented. In examining the English books that were printed between the restoration and the accession of George the second, we may observe, that all *substantives* were begun with a capital, in which we imitated our mother tongue the German; this was more particularly useful to those who were not well acquainted with the English; there being such a prodigious number of our words that are both *verbs* and *substantives* and spelt in the same manner, though often accented differently in the pronunciation. This method has, by the fancy of printers, of late years been laid aside, from an idea that suppressing the capitals shows the character to greater advantage; those letters prominent above the line disturbing its even regular appearance. The effect of this change is so considerable, that a learned man of France who used to read our books, though not perfectly acquainted with our language, in conversation with me on the subject of our authors, attributed the greater obscurity he found in our modern books, compared with those of the period abovementioned, to change of style for the worse in our writers; of which mistake I convinced him by marking for him each *substantive* with a capital in a paragraph, which he then easily understood, though before he could not comprehend it. This shows the inconvenience of that pretended improvement. From the same fondness for an even and uniform appearance of characters in the line, the printers have of late banished also the Italic types, in which words of importance to be attended to in the sense of the sentence, and words on which an emphasis should be put in reading, used to be printed. And lately another fancy has induced some printers to use the short round *s* instead of the long one, which formerly served well to distinguish a word readily by its varied appearance. Certainly the omitting this prominent letter makes the line appear more even; but renders it less immediately legible, as the paring all

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men's noses might smooth and level their faces, but would render their physiognomies less distinguishable. Add to all these improvements *backwards*, another modern fancy that grey printing is more beautiful than black; hence the English new books are printed in so dim a character as to be read with difficulty by old eyes, unless in a very strong light and with good glasses. Whoever compares a volume of the Gentleman's Magazine, printed between the years 1731 and 1740, with one of those printed in the last ten years, will be convinced of the much greater degree of perspicuity given by black ink than by grey. Lord Chesterfield pleasantly remarked this difference to Faulkner, the printer of the Dublin Journal, who was vainly making encomiums on his own paper, as the most complete of any in the world,—"but Mr. Faulkner," said my lord, "don't you think it might be still farther improved by using paper and ink not quite so near of a colour?" For all these reasons I cannot but wish that our American printers would in their editions avoid these fancied improvements, and thereby render their works more agreeable to foreigners in Europe, to the great advantage of our bookselling commerce.

Further, to be more sensible of the advantage of clear and distinct printing, let us consider the assistance it affords in reading well aloud to an auditory. In so doing the eye generally slides forward three or four words before the voice. If the sight clearly distinguishes what the coming words are, it gives time to order the modulation of the voice to express them properly. But if they are obscurely printed or disguised by omitting the capitals and long s's or otherwise, the reader is apt to modulate wrong, and finding he has done so he is obliged to go back and begin the sentence again, which lessens the pleasure of the hearers. This leads me to mention an old error in our mode of printing. We are sensible that when a question is met with in reading, there is a proper variation to be used in the management of the voice. We have therefore a point called an interrogation, affixed to the question in order to distinguish it. But this is absurdly

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placed at its end; so that the reader does not discover it, till he finds he has wrongly modulated his voice, and is therefore obliged to begin again the sentence. To prevent this the Spanish printers, more sensibly, place an interrogation at the beginning as well as at the end of a question. We have another error of the same kind in printing plays, where something often occurs that is marked as spoken *aside*. But the word *aside* is placed at the end of the speech, when it ought to precede it as a direction to the reader, that he may govern his voice accordingly. The practice of our ladies in meeting five or six together to form a little busy party, where each is employed in some useful work while one reads to them, is so commendable in itself that it deserves the attention of authors and printers to make it as pleasing as possible, both to the reader and hearers.

After these general observations permit me to make one, that I imagine may regard your interest. It is that *your* spelling book is miserably printed here, so as in many places to be scarcely legible, and on wretched paper. If this is not attended to, and the new one lately advertised as coming out, should be preferable in these respects, it may hurt the future sale of yours.

I congratulate you on your marriage, of which the newspapers inform me.

My best wishes attend you, being with sincere esteem, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Letter from Dr. Stiles, President of Yale College, &c. to Dr. Franklin.

Yale College, Jan. 28, 1790.

SIR,

WE have lately received governor Yale's portrait from his family in London, and deposited it in the college library, where is also deposited one of governor Saltonstall's. I have also long wished that we might be honored also with that of Dr.

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Franklin. In the course of your long life, you may probably have become possessed of several portraits of yourself. Shall I take too great a liberty, in humbly asking a donation of one of them to Yale College? You obliged me with a mezzotinto picture of yourself many years ago, which I often view with pleasure. But the canvas is more permanent. We wish to be possessed of the durable resemblance of the American patriot and philosopher. You have merited and received all the honors of the republic of letters; and are going to a world, where all sublunary glories will be lost in the glories of immortality. Should you shine throughout the intellectual and stellary universe, with the eminence and distinguished lustre with which you have appeared in this little detached part of the creation, you would be what I most fervently wish to you, sir, whatever may be my fate in eternity. The grand climacteric in which I now am, reminds me of the interesting scenes of futurity. You know, sir, that I am a christian, and would to heaven all others were such as I am, except my imperfections and deficiencies of moral character. As much as I know of Dr. Franklin, I have not an idea of his religious sentiments. I wish to know the opinion of my venerable friend concerning JESUS *of Nazareth.* He will not impute this to *impertinence,* or improper curiosity, in one, who for so many years has continued to love, estimate, and reverence his abilities and literary character, with an ardor and affection bordering on adoration. If I have said too much let the request be blotted out, and be no more; and yet I shall never cease to wish you that happy immortality, which I believe Jesus alone has purchased for the virtuous and truly good of every religious denomination in Christendom, and for those of every age, nation, and mythology, who reverence the deity, are filled with integrity, righteousness, and benevolence.

Wishing you every blessing, I am, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

EZRA STILES.

His excellency Dr. Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia.

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Answer to the Reverend President Stiles.

Philadelphia, March 9, 1790.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of January 28, and am glad you have at length received the portrait of governor Yale from his family, and deposited it in the college library. He was a great and good man, and had the merit of doing infinite service to your country by his munificence to that institution. The honor you propose doing me, by placing mine in the same room with his, is much too great for my deserts; but you always had a partiality for me, and to that it must be ascribed. I am however too much obliged to Yale College, the first learned society that took notice of me, and adorned me with its honors, to refuse a request that comes from it through so esteemed a friend. But I do not think any one of the portraits you mention as in my possession worthy of the situation and company you propose to place it in. You have an excellent artist lately arrived. If he will undertake to make one for you, I shall cheerfully pay the expense: but he must not delay setting about it, or I may slip through his fingers, for I am now in my 85th year, and very infirm.

I send with this a very learned work as it seems to me, on the ancient Samaritan Coins, lately printed in Spain, and at least curious for the beauty of the impression. Please to accept it for your college library. I have subscribed for the Encyclopedia now printing here, with the intention of presenting it to the college. I shall probably depart before the work is finished, but shall leave directions for its continuance to the end. With this you will receive some of the first numbers.

You desire to know something of my religion. It is the first time I have been questioned upon it. But cannot take your curiosity amiss, and shall endeavor in a few words to gratify it. Here is my creed: I believe in one God, the creator of the universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable

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service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental points in all sound religion, and I regard them as you do in whatever sect I meet with them. As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the system of morals and his religion, as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is like to see; but I apprehend, it has received various corrupting changes, and I have, with most of the present dissenters in England, some doubts as to his divinity; though it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble. I see no harm however in its being believed, if that belief has the good consequence, as probably it has, of making his doctrines more respected and more observed, especially as I do not perceive that the Supreme takes it amiss by distinguishing the believers in his government of the world with any peculiar marks of his displeasure. I shall only add respecting myself, that having experienced the goodness of that being in conducting me prosperously through a long life, I have no doubt of its continuance in the next, though without the smallest conceit of meriting such goodness. My sentiments on this head you will see in the copy of an old letter inclosed,[w] which I wrote in answer to one from an old religionist whom I had relieved in a paralytic case by electricity, and who being afraid I should grow proud upon it, sent me his serious, though rather impertinent caution. I send you also the copy of another letter[x] which will show something of my disposition relating to religion.

With great and sincere esteem and affection, I am, &c.

PS. Had not your college some present of books from the king of France. Please to let me know if you had an expec-

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[w] Supposed to be a letter to George Whitfield, dated June 6, 1753, p. 31.

[x] Uncertain: perhaps the following one.

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tation given you of more, and the nature of that expectation? I have a reason for the inquiry.

I confide that you will not expose me to criticisms and censures by publishing any part of this communication to you. I have ever let others enjoy their religious sentiments, without reflecting on them for those that appeared to me unsupportable or even absurd. All sects here, and we have a great variety, have experienced my good will in assisting them with subscriptions for the building their new places of worship, and as I have never opposed any of their doctrines, I hope to go out of the world in peace with them all.

To * * *.

(Without date.)

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument it contains against a particular Providence, though you allow a general Providence, you strike at the foundations of all religion. For without the belief of a Providence that takes cognizance of, guards and guides, and may favor particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear its displeasure, or to pray for its protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles, though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my opinion, that though your reasonings are subtle, and may prevail with some readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject, and the consequence of printing this piece will be, a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face. But were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous life without the assistance afforded by religion; you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice, and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common temptations. But think how great a portion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced inconsi-

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derate youth of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great point for its security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our most distinguished authors. For among us it is not necessary as among the Hottentots, that a youth to be raised into the company of men should prove his manhood by beating his mother. I would advise you therefore not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person, whereby you will save yourself a great deal of mortification from the enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of regret and repentance. If men are so wicked *with religion*, what would they be if *without it?* I intend this letter itself as a *proof* of my friendship, and therefore add no *professions* to it; but subscribe simply yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

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POLITICAL.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

PART II.*

To Joseph Galloway, Esq., Speaker of the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania.

London, June 13, 1767.

DEAR SIR,

IN my last of May 20th, I mentioned my hopes that we should at length get over all obstructions to the repeal of the act restraining the legal tender of paper money; but those hopes are now greatly lessened.

The ministry had agreed to the repeal, and the notion that had possessed them, that they might make a revenue from paper money in appropriating the interest by parliament, was pretty well removed by my assuring them, that it was my opinion no colony would make money on those terms, and that the benefits arising to the commerce of this country in America from a plentiful currency, would therefore be lost, and the repeal answer no end, if the assemblies were not allowed to appropriate the interest themselves; that the crown might get a great share upon occasional requisitions, I made no doubt, by voluntary appropriations of the assemblies; but they would never establish such funds as to make themselves unnecessary to government, &c. Those and other reasons that were urged seemed to satisfy them, and we began to think all would go on smoothly, and the merchants prepared their petition, on which the repeal was to be founded. But in the house, when the chancellor of the Exchequer had gone through his proposed American revenue, viz. by duties on glass, china ware, paper, pasteboard, colours, tea, &c. Gren-

* Part I. will be found in Vol. V. p. 339 of this edition.

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ville stood up and undervalued them all as trifles; and, says he, "I 'll tell the honorable gentleman of a revenue, what will produce something valuable in America: make paper money for the colonies, issue it upon loan there, take the interest, and apply it as you think proper." Mr. Townsend finding the house listened to this, and seemed to like it, stood up again, and said "that was a proposition of his own which he had intended to make with the rest, but it had slipt his memory, and the gentleman, who must have heard of it, now unfairly would take advantage of that slip and make a merit to himself of a proposition that was another's, and as a proof of it, assured the house a bill was prepared for the purpose and would be laid before them." This startled all our friends; and the merchants concluded to keep back their petition for a while, till things appeared a little clearer, lest their friends in America should blame them, as having furnished foundation for an act that must have been disagreeable to the colonies. I found the rest of the ministry did not like this proceeding of the chancellor's, but there was no going on with our scheme against his declaration, and as he daily talked of resigning, there being no good agreement between him and the rest; and as we found the general prejudice against the colonies so strong in the house, that any thing in the shape of a favor to them all was like to meet with great opposition, whether he was out or in, I proposed to Mr. Jackson, the putting our colony foremost, as we stood in a pretty good light, and asking the favor for us alone. This he agreed might be proper, in case the chancellor should go out, and undertook to bring in a bill for that purpose, provided the Philadelphia merchants would petition for it, and he wished to have such petition ready to present, if an opening for it should offer. Accordingly I applied to them and prepared a draft of a petition for them to sign, a copy of which I send you inclosed. They seemed generally for the measure; but apprehending the merchants of the other colonies, who had hitherto gone hand in hand with us in all American affairs, might take umbrage if we now separated from them, it was

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thought right to call a meeting of the whole to consult upon this proposal. At this meeting I represented to them, as the ground of this measure, that the colonies being generally out of favor at present, any hard clause relating to paper money in the repealing bill, will be more easily received in parlialiament, if the bill related to all the colonies: that Pennsylvania being in some degree of favor, might possibly alone obtain a better act than the whole could do, as it might by government be thought as good policy to show favor where there had been the reverse. That a good act obtained by Pennsylvania, might another year, when the resentment against the colonies should be abated, be made use of as a precedent, &c. &c. But after a good deal of debate, it was finally concluded not to precipitate matters, it being very dangerous by any kind of petition to furnish the chancellor with a horse on which he could put what saddle he thought fit: the other merchants seemed rather averse to the Pennsylvania merchants proceeding alone, but said they were certainly at liberty to do as they thought proper. The conclusion of the Pennsylvania merchants was to wait a while, holding the separate petition ready to sign, and present if a proper opening should appear this session, but otherwise to reserve it to the next, when the complexion of ministers and measures may probably be changed. And as this session now draws to a conclusion, I begin to think nothing will be farther done in it this year.

Mentioning the merchants, puts me in mind of some discourse I heard among them, that was by no means agreeable. It was said that in the opposition they gave the Stamp act, and their endeavors to obtain the repeal, they had spent at their meetings, and in expresses to all parts of this country, and for a vessel to carry the joyful news to N. America, and in the entertainments given our friends of both houses, &c. near fifteen hundred pounds; that for all this, except from the little colony of Rhode Island, they had not received as much as a *thank ye*. That on the contrary the circular letters they had written

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with the best intentions to the merchants of the several colonies, containing their best and most friendly advice, were either answered with unkind reflections, or contemptuously left without answer. And that the captain of the vessel, they sent express with the news, having met with misfortunes, that obliged him to travel by land through all the colonies from New Hampshire to Pennsylvania, was every where treated with neglect and contempt, instead of civility and hospitality; and no where with more than at Philadelphia, where, though he delivered letters to the merchants, that must make him and his errand known to them, no one took the least notice of him. I own I was ashamed to hear all this, but hope there is some mistake in it. I should not have troubled you with this account, but that I think we stand in truth greatly obliged to the merchants, who are a very respectable body, and whose friendship is worth preserving, as it may greatly help us on future occasions; and therefore I wish some decent acknowledgments or thanks were sent from the assemblies of the colonies, since their correspondents have omitted it.

I have said the less of late in my letters concerning the petitions, because I hoped this summer to have an opportunity of communicating every thing *viva voce*, and there are particulars that cannot safely be trusted to paper. Perhaps I may be more determined, as to returning or staying another winter, when I receive my next letters from you and my other friends in Philadelphia.

We got the chancellor to drop his Salt duty. And the merchants trading to Portugal and Spain, he says, have made such a clamor about the intention of suffering ships to go directly with wine, fruit, and oil, from those countries to America, that he has dropped that scheme, and we are it seems to labour a little longer under the inconveniences of the restraint.

It is said the bill to suspend the legislatures of New York and Georgia, till they comply with the act of parliament for quartering soldiers, will pass this session. I fear that impru-

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dencies on both sides may, step by step, bring on the most mischievous consequences. It is imagined here, that this act will enforce immediate compliance; and if the people should be quiet, content themselves with the laws they have, and let the matter rest, till in some future war the king wanting aids from them, and finding himself restrained in his legislation by the act as much as the people, shall think fit by his ministers to propose the repeal, the parliament will be greatly disappointed; and perhaps it may take this turn. I wish nothing worse may happen.

The present ministry will probably continue through this session. But their disagreement, with the total inability of lord Chatham, through sickness to do any business, must bring on some change before next winter. I wish it may be for the better, but fear the contrary.

Please to present my dutiful respects to the assembly, and believe me ever, dear sir, yours and the committee's most obedient and faithful humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

London, August 8, 1767.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE before me your favors of April 23, May 21 and 26. The confusion among our great men still continues as much as ever, and a melancholy thing it is to consider, that instead of employing the present leisure of peace in such measures as might extend our commerce, pay off our debts, secure allies, and increase the strength and ability of the nation to support a future war, the whole seems to be wasted in party contentions, about places of power and profit, in court intrigues and cabals, and in abusing one another.

There has lately been an attempt to make a kind of coalition of parties in a new ministry, but it fell through, and the present set is like to continue for some time longer, which I am rather pleased with, as some of those who

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were proposed to be introduced are professed adversaries to America, which is now made one of the distinctions of party here; those who have in the two last sessions shown a disposition to favor us, being called by way of reproach, Americans; while the others, adherents to Grenville and Bedford, value themselves on being true to the interests of Britain, and zealous for maintaining its dignity and sovereignty over the colonies. This distinction will, it is apprehended, be carried much higher in the next session, for the political purpose of influencing the ensuing election. It is already given out that the compliance of New York, in providing for the quarters, without taking notice of its being done in obedience to the act of parliament, is evasive and unsatisfactory. That it is high time to put the right and power of this country to tax the colonies out of dispute, by an act of taxation, effectually carried into execution, and that all the colonies should be obliged explicitly to acknowledge that right. Every step is taking to render the taxing America a popular measure here, by continually insisting on the topics of our wealth and flourishing circumstances, while this country is loaded with debt, great part of it incurred on our account, the distress of the poor here by the multitude and weight of taxes, &c. &c. and though the traders and manufacturers may possibly be kept in our interest, the idea of an American tax is very pleasing to the landed men, who therefore readily receive and propagate these sentiments wherever they have influence. If such a bill should be brought in, it is hard to say what would be the event of it, or what would be the effects. Those who oppose it, though they should be strong enough to throw it out, would be stigmatised as Americans, betrayers of Old England, &c. and perhaps our friends by this means being excluded, a majority of our adversaries may get in, and then the act infallibly passes the following session. To avoid the danger of such exclusion, perhaps little opposition will be given, and then it passes immediately. I know not what to advise on this occasion, but that we should all do our endeavors on both sides the water to lessen the present unpopula-

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rity of the American cause, conciliate the affections of people here towards us, increase by all possible means the number of our friends, and be careful not to weaken their hands and strengthen those of our enemies, by rash proceedings on our side, the mischiefs of which are inconceivable. Some of our friends have thought that a publication of my examination here, might answer some of the above purposes, by removing prejudices and refuting falsehoods, and demonstrating our merits with regard to this country. It is accordingly printed, and has a great run. I have another piece in hand, which I intend to put out about the time of the meeting of parliament, if those I consult with shall judge that it may be of service.

The next session of parliament will probably be a short one, on account of the following election. And I am now advised by some of our great friends here to see that out, not returning to America till the spring. My presence indeed is necessary there to settle some private affairs. Unforeseen and unavoidable difficulties have hitherto obstructed our proceedings in the main intent of my coming over, and perhaps (though I think my being here has not been altogether unserviceable) our friends in the assembly may begin to be discouraged and tired of the expense. If that should be the case I would not have you propose to continue me as agent at the meeting of the new assembly: my endeavors to serve the province in what I may while I remain here, shall not be lessened by that omission.

I am glad you have made a trial of paper money, *not a legal tender*. The quantity being small, may perhaps be kept in full credit notwithstanding; and if that can be avoided, I am not for applying here again very soon for a repeal of the restraining act. I am afraid an ill use will be made of it. The plan of our adversaries is to render assemblies in America useless; and to have a revenue independent of their grants, for all the purposes of their defence, and supporting governments among them. It is our interest to prevent this. And that they may not lay hold of our necessities for paper

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money, to draw a revenue from that article, whenever they grant us the liberty we want, of making it a legal tender, I wish some other method may be fallen upon of supporting its credit. What think you of getting all the merchants, traders, and principal people of all sorts, to join in petitions to the assembly for a moderate emission, the petition being accompanied with a mutual engagement to take it in all dealings at the rates fixed by law? Such an engagement had a great effect in fixing the value and rates of our gold and silver. Or, perhaps, a bank might be established that would answer all purposes. Indeed I think with you that those merchants here, who have made difficulties on the subject of the legal tender, have not understood their own interests. For there can be no doubt, that should a scarcity of money continue among us, we shall take off less of their merchandise, and attend more to manufacturing, and raising the necessaries and superfluities of life among ourselves, which we now receive from them. And perhaps this consequence would attend our making no paper money at all of any sort, that being thus by a want of cash driven to industry and frugality, we should gradually become more rich without their trade, than we can possibly be with it, and by keeping in the country the real cash that comes into it, have in time a quantity sufficient for all our occasions. But I suppose our people will scarce have patience to wait for this.

I have received the printed votes, but not the laws. I hear nothing yet of any objection made by the proprietaries to any of them at the board of trade.

Please to present my duty to the assembly, with thanks for their care of me, and assure them of my most faithful services.

With sincerest esteem and respect, I am, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Governor Franklin, New Jersey.

London, August 28, 1767.

DEAR SON,

I HAVE no letter of yours since my last, in which I answered all preceding ones.

Last week I dined at lord Shelburne's, and had a long conversation with him and Mr. Conway (there being no other company), on the subject of reducing American expense. They have it in contemplation to return the management of Indian affairs into the hands of the several provinces on which the nations border, that the colonies may bear the charge of treaties, &c. which they think will then be managed more frugally, the treasury being tired with the immense drafts of the superintendants, &c. I took the opportunity of urging it as one means of saving expense in supporting the out-posts, that a settlement should be made in the Illinois country; expatiated on the various advantages, viz. furnishing provisions cheaper to the garrisons, securing the country, retaining the trade, raising a strength there which on occasion of a future war, might easily be poured down the Mississippi upon the lower country, and into the bay of Mexico, to be used against Cuba or Mexico itself, &c. I mentioned your plan, its being approved by sir William Johnson, the readiness and ability of the gentlemen concerned to carry the settlement into execution, with very little expense to the crown, &c. The secretaries appeared finally to be fully convinced, and there remained no obstacle but the board of trade, which was to be brought over privately, before the matter should be referred to them officially. In case of laying aside the superintendants, a provision was thought of for sir William Johnson, &c. We had a good deal of farther discourse on American affairs, particularly on paper money: lord Shelburne declared himself fully convinced of the utility of taking off the restraint, by my answer to the report of the board of trade. General Conway had not seen it, and desired me to send it to him, which I did next morning. They gave me

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expectation of a repeal next session, lord Clare being come over: but they said there was some difficulty with others at the board, who had signed that report: for there was a good deal in what Soame Jenyns had laughingly said, when asked to concur in some measure, *I have no kind of objection to it, provided we have heretofore signed nothing to the contrary.* In this conversation I did not forget our main Pennsylvania business, and I think made some farther progress, though but little. The two secretaries seemed intent upon preparing business for next parliament, which makes me think, that the late projects of changes are now quite over, and that they expect to continue in place. But whether they will do much or little I cannot say.

Du Guerchy the French ambassador is gone home, and Monsieur Durand is left minister plenipotentiary. He is extremely curious to inform himself in the affairs of America; pretends to have a great esteem for me, on account of the abilities shown in my examination; has desired to have all my political writings, invited me to dine with him, was very inquisitive, treated me with great civility, makes me visits, &c. I fancy that intriguing nation would like very well to meddle on occasion, and blow up the coals between Britain and her colonies; but I hope we shall give them no opportunity.

I write this in a great hurry, being setting out in an hour on another journey with my steady good friend sir John Pringle. We propose to visit Paris. Durand has given me letters of recommendation to the lord knows who. I am told I shall meet with great respect there; but winds change, and perhaps it will be full as well if I do not. We shall be gone six weeks. I have a little private commission to transact, of which more another time. Communicate nothing of this letter but privately to our friend Galloway.

I am your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the same.

London, Nov. 25, 1767.

DEAR SON,

I THINK the New Yorkers have been very discreet in forbearing to write and publish against the late act of parliament. I wish the Boston people had been as quiet, since governor Bernard has sent over all their violent papers to the ministry, and wrote them word that he daily expected a rebellion. He did indeed afterwards correct this extravagance, by writing again, that he now understood those papers were approved but by few, and disliked by all the sober sensible people of the province. A certain noble lord expressed himself to me with some disgust and contempt of Bernard, on this occasion, saying he ought to have known his people better, than to impute to the whole country sentiments, that perhaps are only scribbled by some madman in a garret; that he appeared to be too fond of contention, and mistook the matter greatly, in supposing such letters as he wrote were acceptable to the ministry. I have heard nothing of the appointment of general Clark to New York: but I know he is a friend of lord Shelburne's, and the same that recommended Mr. M'Lean to be his secretary. Perhaps it might be talked of in my absence.

The commissioners for the American Board, went hence while I was in France; you know before this time who they are and how they are received, which I want to hear. Mr. Williams, who is gone in some office with them, is brother to our cousin Williams of Boston; but I assure you I had not the least share in his appointment; having, as I told you before, carefully kept out of the way of that whole affair.

As soon as I received Mr. Galloway's, Mr. T. Wharton's and Mr. Croghan's letters on the subject of the boundary, I communicated them immediately to lord Shelburne. He invited me the next day to dine with him. Lord Clare was to have been there but did not come. There was nobody but Mr.

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M'Lean. My lord knew nothing of the boundary's having ever been agreed on by sir William, had sent the letters to the board of trade, desiring search to be made there for sir William's letters, and ordered Mr. M'Lean to search the secretary's office, who found nothing. We had much discourse about it, and I pressed the importance of despatching orders immediately to sir William to complete the affair. His lordship asked who was to make the purchase, i. e. be at the expense? I said that if the line included any lands within the grants of the charter colonies, they should pay the purchase money of such proportion. If any within the proprietary grants they should pay their proportion, but that what was within royal governments where the king granted the lands, the crown should pay for that proportion. His lordship was pleased to say he thought this reasonable. He finally desired me to go to lord Clare, as from him, and urge the business there, which I undertook to do. Among other things at this conversation, we talked of the new settlement; his lordship told me he had himself drawn up a paper of reasons for those settlements, which he laid before the king in council, acquainting them that he did not offer them merely as his own sentiments, they were what he had collected from general Amherst, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Jackson, three gentlemen that were allowed to be the best authorities for any thing that related to America. I think he added that the council seemed to approve of the design: I know it was referred to the board of trade, who I believe have not yet reported on it, and I doubt will report against it. My lord told me one pleasant circumstance, viz., that he had shown his paper to the dean of Gloucester (Tucker), to hear his opinion of the matter; who very sagaciously remarked that he was sure that paper was drawn up by Dr. Franklin, he saw him in every paragraph; adding that Dr. Franklin, wanted to remove the seat of government to America; that, says he, is his constant plan.

I waited next morning upon lord Clare, and pressed the matter of the boundary closely upon him. He said they could not find they had ever received any letters from sir William

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concerning this boundary, but were searching farther: agreed to the necessity of settling it; but thought there would be some difficulty about who should pay the purchase money; for that this country was already so loaded it could bear no more. We then talked of the new colonies. I found he was inclined to think one near the mouth of the Ohio might be of use, in securing the country, but did not much approve that at Detroit. And as to the trade, he imagined it would be of little consequence if we had all the peltry to be purchased there, but supposed our traders would sell it chiefly to the French and Spaniards, at New Orleans, as he heard they had hitherto done.

At the same time that we Americans wish not to be judged of, in the gross, by particular papers written by anonymous scribblers and published in the colonies, it would be well if we could avoid falling into the same mistake in America, in judging of ministers here by the libels printed against them. The inclosed is a very abusive one, in which if there is any foundation of truth, it can only be in the insinuation contained in the words, "*after eleven adjournments*" that they are too apt to postpone business: but if they have given any occasion for this reflection, there are reasons and circumstances that may be urged in their excuse.

It gives me pleasure to hear that the people of the other colonies are not insensible of the zeal with which I occasionally espouse their respective interests, as well as the interests of the whole. I shall continue to do so as long as I reside here and am able.

The present ministry seem now likely to continue through this session of parliament; and perhaps if the new parliament should not differ greatly in complexion from this, they may be fixed for a number of years, which I earnestly wish, as we have no chance for a better.

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To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

London, Dec. 1, 1767.

DEAR SIR,

I DULY received your favors of August 22, September 20 and October 8, and within these few days one of February 14, recommending Mr. Morgan Edwards and his affair of the Rhode Island college, which I shall endeavor to promote, deeming the institution one of the most catholic and generous of the kind.

I am inclined to think with you that the small sum you have issued to discharge the public debts only will not be materially affected in its credit for want of the legal tender, considering especially the present extreme want of money in the province. You appear to me to point out the true cause of the general distress, viz. the late luxurious mode of living introduced by a too great plenty of cash. It is indeed amazing to consider, that we had a quantity sufficient before the war began, and that the war added immensely to that quantity, by the sums spent among us by the crown, and the paper struck and issued in the province; and now in so few years all the money spent by the crown is gone away, and has carried with it all the gold and silver we had before, leaving us bare and empty, and at the same time more in debt to England than ever we were! But I am inclined to think, that the mere making more money will not mend our circumstances, if we do not return to that industry and frugality which were the fundamental causes of our former prosperity. I shall nevertheless do my utmost this winter to obtain the repeal of the act restraining the legal tender, if our friends the merchants think it practicable, and will heartily espouse the cause; and in truth they have full as much interest in the event as we have.

The present ministry it is now thought are likely to continue at least till a new parliament, so that our apprehensions of a change, and that Mr. Grenville would come in again seem over for the present. He behaves as if a little out of his

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head on the article of America, which he brings into every debate without rhyme or reason, when the matter has not the least connection with it; thus at the beginning of this session on the debate upon the king's speech, he tired every body, even his friends, with a long harangue about and against America, of which there was not a word in the speech. Last Friday he produced in the house a late Boston Gazette, which he said denied the legislative authority of parliament, was treasonable, rebellious, &c. and moved it might be read, and that the house would take cognizance of it, but it being moved on the other hand that Mr. G.'s motion should be postponed to that day six months, it was carried without a division: and as it is known that this parliament will expire before that time, it was equivalent to a total rejection of the motion. The duke of B.* too it seems moved in vain for a consideration of this paper in the house of lords. These are favorable symptoms of the present disposition of parliament towards America, which I hope no conduct of the Americans will give just cause of altering.

Be so good as to present my best respects to the house, and believe me with sincere esteem and regard, dear sir, your affectionate friend and most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Ross, Philadelphia.

London, Dec. 13, 1767.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of October 18. I had before seen with great pleasure your name in the papers as chosen for the city of Philadelphia.

The instruction you mention, as proposed by a certain great man, was really a wild one. The reasons you made use of against it, were clear and strong, and could not but prevail. It will be time enough to show a dislike to the coalition when

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* Bedford.

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it is proposed to us. Meanwhile we have all the advantage in the agreement of taxation, which our not being represented will continue to give us. I think indeed that such an event is very remote. This nation is indeed too proud to propose admitting American representatives into their parliament; and America is not so humble or so fond of the honor as to petition for it. In matrimonial matches 'tis said, when one party is willing the match is half made, but where neither party is willing there is no great danger of their coming together. And to be sure such an important business would never be treated of by agents unimpowered and uninstructed; nor would government here act upon the private opinion of agents which might be disowned by their constituents.

The present ministry seem now likely to continue through this session; and this, as a new election approaches, gives them the advantage of getting so many of their friends chosen as may give a stability to their administration. I heartily wish it, because they are all well disposed towards America.

With sincere esteem, I am, dear sir, your affectionate friend and most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

London, Dec. 19, 1767.

DEAR SIR,

THE resolutions of the Boston people concerning trade, make a great noise here. Parliament has not yet taken notice of them, but the newspapers are in full cry against America. Colonel Onslow told me at court last Sunday, that I could not conceive how much the friends of America were run upon and hurt by them, and how much the Grenvillians triumphed. I have just written a paper for next Tuesday's Chronicle to extenuate matters a little.

Mentioning colonel Onslow, reminds me of something that passed at the beginning of this session in the house between him and Mr. Grenville. The latter had been raving against America, as traitorous, rebellious, &c. when the former, who

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has always been its firm friend, stood up and gravely said, that in reading the Roman history he found it was a custom among that wise and magnanimous people, whenever the senate was informed of any discontent in the provinces, to send two or three of their body into the discontented provinces, to inquire into the grievances complained of, and report to the senate, that mild measures might be used to remedy what was amiss, before any severe steps were taken to enforce obedience. That this example he thought worthy our imitation in the present state of our colonies, for he did so far agree with the honorable gentleman that spoke just before him, as to allow there were great discontents among them. He should therefore beg leave to move that two or three members of parliament be appointed to go over to New England on this service. And that it might not be supposed he was for imposing burthens on others what he would not be willing to bear himself, he did at the same time declare his own willingness if the house should think fit to appoint them, to go over thither *with that honorable gentleman.* Upon this there was a great laugh which continued sometime, and was rather increased by Mr. Grenville's asking, "will the gentleman engage that I shall be safe there? Can I be assured that I shall be allowed to come back again to make the report?" As soon as the laugh was so far subsided as that Mr. Onslow could be heard again, he added, "I cannot absolutely engage for the honorable gentleman's safe return, but if he goes thither upon this service, I am strongly of opinion the *event* will contribute greatly to the future quiet of both countries." On which the laugh was renewed and redoubled.

If our people should follow the Boston example in entering into resolutions of frugality and industry, full as necessary for us as for them, I hope they will among other things give this reason, that 'tis to enable them more speedily and effectually to discharge their debts to Great Britain; this will soften a little and at the same time appear honorable and like ourselves. Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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Governor Pownall to Dr. Franklin,

(Concerning an equal communication of rights, privileges, &c. to America by Great Britain.)

DEAR SIR,

THE following *objection* against communicating to the colonies the rights, privileges, and powers of the realm, as to parts of the realm, has been made. I have been endeavoring to obviate it, and I communicate [it] to you, in hopes of your promised assistance.

If, *say the objectors*, we communicate to the colonies the power of sending representatives, and in consequence expect them to participate in an *equal share and proportion* of all our taxes; we must grant to them all the powers of trade and manufacturing, which any other parts of the realm within the Isle of Great Britain enjoy:—If so, perchance the profits of the Atlantic commerce may converge to some centre in America; to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, or to some of the isles:—If so, then the natural and artificial produce of the colonies, and in course of consequences the landed interest of the colonies, will be promoted; while the natural and artificial produce and landed interest of Great Britain will be depressed to its utter ruin and destruction; and consequently, the balance of the power of government, although still within *the realm*, will be *locally* transferred from Great Britain to the colonies. Which consequence, however it may suit a citizen of the world, must be folly and madness to *a Briton*.

My fit is gone off; and though weak, both from the gout and a concomitant and very ugly fever, I am much better.

Would be glad to see you.

Your friend,

J. POWNALL.

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On the back of the foregoing letter of General Pownall, are the following minutes by Dr. Franklin.

THIS *objection* goes upon the supposition, that whatever the colonies gain, Britain must lose; and that if the *colonies* can be kept from gaining an advantage, *Britain will gain it:*

If the colonies are fitter for a particular trade than Britain they should have it, and Britain apply to what it is more fit for. The whole empire is a gainer. And if Britain is not so fit or so well situated for a particular advantage, *other* countries will get it, *if the colonies do not.* Thus Ireland was forbid the woollen manufacture, and remains poor: but this has given to the French the trade and wealth Ireland might have gained for the British empire.

The government cannot *long* be retained without the union. Which is best (supposing your case) to have a total separation, or a change of the seat of government?—It by no means follows, that promoting and advancing the landed interest in America will depress that of Britain: the contrary has always been the fact. Advantageous situations and circumstances will always secure and fix manufactures: Sheffield against all Europe these 300 years past.—

To Governor Franklin.

London, Jan. 9, 1768.

DEAR SON,

WE have had so many alarms of changes, which did not take place, that just when I wrote it was thought the ministry would stand their ground. However, immediately after the talk was renewed, and it soon appeared that the Sunday changes were actually settled. Mr. Conway resigns and lord Weymouth takes his place. Lord Gower is made president of the council in the room of lord Northington. Lord Shelburne is stript of the America business, which is given to lord Hillsborough, as secretary of state for America, a new

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distinct department. Lord Sandwich 'tis said comes into the post office in his place. Several of the Bedford party are now to come in. How these changes may affect us a little time will show. Little at present is thought of but elections, which gives me hopes that nothing will be done against America this session, though the Boston Gazette had occasioned some heats, and the Boston resolutions a prodigious clamour. I have endeavored to palliate matters for them as well as I can: I send you my manuscript of one paper, though I think you take the Chronicle. The editor of that paper, one Jones, seems a Grenvillian, or is very cautious as you will see, by his corrections and omissions. He has drawn the teeth and pared the nails of my paper, so that it can neither scratch nor bite. It seems only to paw and mumble. I send you also two other late pieces of mine. There is another which I cannot find.

I am told there has been a talk of getting me appointed under-secretary to lord Hillsborough; but with little likelihood, as it is a settled point here that I am too much of an American.

I am in very good health, thanks to God: your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

London, Jan. 9, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

I WROTE to you viâ Boston, and have little to add, except to acquaint you, that some changes have taken place since my last, which have not the most promising aspect for America, several of the Bedford party being come into employment again; a party that has distinguished itself by exclaiming against us on all late occasions. Mr. Conway, one of our friends, has resigned, and lord Weymouth takes his place. Lord Shelburne, another friend, is stripped of the American part of the business of his office, which now makes a distinct department, in which lord Hillsborough is placed. I

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do not think this nobleman in general an enemy to America; but in the affair of paper money he was last winter strongly against us. I did hope I had removed some of his prejudices on that head, but am not certain. We have however increased the cry for it here, and believe shall attempt to obtain the repeal of the act, though the Boston Gazette and their resolutions about manufactures have hurt us much, having occasioned an immense clamour here. I have endeavored to palliate matters for them as well as I can, and hope with some success. For having, in a large company in which were some members of parliament, given satisfaction to all, by what I alleged in explanation of the conduct of the Americans, and to show that they were not quite so unreasonable as they appeared to be, I was advised by several present to make my sentiments public, not only for the sake of America, but as it would be some ease to our friends here, who are triumphed over a good deal by our adversaries on the occasion. I have accordingly done it in the inclosed paper.

I shall write you fully on other subjects very soon, at present can only add my respects to the committee, and that I am, dear sir, your faithful humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

London, Feb. 17, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

IN mine of January 9, I wrote to you that I believed, notwithstanding the clamour against America had been greatly increased by the Boston proceedings, we should attempt this session to obtain the repeal of the restraining act relating to paper money. The change of the administration with regard to American affairs, which was agreed on some time before the new secretary kissed hands and entered upon business, made it impossible to go forward with that affair, as the minister quitting that department would not, and his successor could not engage in it; but now our friends the merchants have been moving in it, and some of

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them have conceived hopes, from the manner in which lord Hillsborough attended to their representations. It had been previously concluded among us, that if the repeal was to be obtained at all, it must be proposed in the light of a favor to the merchants of this country, and asked for by them, not by the agents as a favor to America. But as my lord had, at sundry times before he came into his present station, discoursed with me on the subject, and got from me a copy of my answer to his report, when at the head of the board of trade, which some time since he thanked me for, and said he would read again and consider carefully, I waited upon him this morning, partly with intent to learn if he had changed his sentiments. We entered into the subject and had a long conversation upon it, in which all the arguments he used, against the legal tender of paper money, were intended to demonstrate that it was for the benefit of the people themselves to have no such money current among them; and it was strongly his opinion, that after the experience of being without it a few years we should all be convinced of this truth, as he said, the New England colonies now were; they having lately on the rumor of an intended application for taking off the restraint, petitioned here that it might be continued as to them. However, his lordship was pleased to say, that if such application was made for the three colonies of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and new York, as I proposed, it should have fair play, he would himself give it no sort of opposition, but he was sure it would meet with a great deal, and he thought it could not succeed. He was pleased to make me compliments upon my paper, assuring me he had read it with a great deal of attention, that I had said much more in favor of such a currency than he thought could be said, and all he believed that the subject would admit of; but that it had not on the whole changed his opinion, any further than to induce him to leave the matter now to the judgment of others, and let it take its course, without opposing it as last year he had determined to have done. I go into the city to-morrow, to confer with the merchants again upon it; that if they see any

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hopes, we may at least try the event: but I own my expectations are now very slender, knowing as I do, that nothing is to be done in parliament that is not a measure adopted by ministry and supported by their strength, much less any thing they are averse to *or indifferent about.*

I took the opportunity of discoursing with his lordship concerning our particular affair of the change of government, gave him a detail of all proceedings hitherto, the delays it had met with, and its present situation. He was pleased to say he would inquire into the matter, and would talk with me farther upon it. He expressed great satisfaction in the good disposition that he said appeared now to be general in America, with regard to government here, according to the latest advices: and informed me that he had by his majesty's order wrote the most healing letters to the several governors, which if shown to the assemblies, as he supposed they would be, could not but confirm that good disposition. As to the permission we want to bring wine, fruit, and oil directly from Spain and Portugal, and to carry iron direct to foreign markets, 'tis agreed on all hands, that this is an unfavorable time to move in those matters; G. Grenville and those in the opposition, on every hint of the kind, making a great noise about the Act of Navigation, that palladium of England as they call it, to be given up to rebellious America, &c. &c., so that the ministry would not venture to propose it if *they* approved. I am to wait on the secretary again next Wednesday, and shall write you farther what passes, that is material.

The parliament have of late been acting an egregious farce, calling before them the mayor and aldermen of Oxford, for proposing a sum to be paid by their old members on being rechosen at the next election; and sundry printers and brokers, for advertising and dealing in boroughs, &c. The Oxford people were sent to Newgate, and discharged after some days on humble petition, and receiving the speaker's reprimand upon their knees. The house could scarcely keep countenances, knowing as they all do, that the practice is general. People say, they mean nothing more than to *beat down the*

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price by a little discouragement of borough-jobbing, now that their own elections are all coming on. The price indeed is grown exorbitant, no less than *four thousand pounds* for a member. Mr. Beckford has brought in a bill for preventing bribery and corruption in elections, wherein was a clause to oblige every member to swear, on their admission into the house, that he had not directly or indirectly given any bribe to any elector, &c.; but this was so universally exclaimed against, as answering no end but perjuring the members, that he has been obliged to withdraw that clause. It was indeed a cruel contrivance of his, worse than the gunpowder plot; for that was only to blow the parliament up to heaven, this to sink them all down to ——. Mr. Thurlow opposed his bill by a long speech. Beckford, in reply, gave a dry hit to the house, that is repeated every where, "the honorable gentleman, says he, in his learned discourse, gave us first one definition of corruption, then he gave us another definition of corruption, and I think he was about to give us a third. Pray does that gentleman imagine *there is any member of this house that does not* KNOW what corruption is?" which occasioned only a roar of laughter, for they are so hardened in the practice, that they are very little ashamed of it. This between ourselves.

I am with sincerest esteem, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To T. Wharton, Esq., Philadelphia.

London, Feb. 20, 1768.

DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your favors of November 17 and 18, with another dozen of excellent wine, the manufacture of our friend Lievezy. I thank you for the care you have taken in forwarding them, and for your kind good wishes that accompany them.

The story you mention of secretary Conway's wondering what I could be doing in England, and that he had not seen

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me for a considerable time, savors strongly of the channel through which it came, and deserves no notice. But since his name is mentioned, it gives me occasion to relate what passed between us the last time I had the honor of conversing with him. It was at court, when the late changes were first rumored, and it was reported he was to resign the secretary's office. Talking of America, I said I was sorry to find that our friends were one after another quitting the administration, that I was apprehensive of the consequences, and hoped what I heard of his going out was not true. He said it was really true, the employment had not been of his choice, he had never any taste for it, but had submitted to engage in it for a time, at the instance of his friends, and he believed his removal could not be attended with any ill consequences to America: that he was a sincere well-wisher to the prosperity of that country as well as this, and hoped the imprudencies of either side would never be carried to such a height as to create a breach of the union, so essentially necessary to the welfare of both: that as long as his majesty continued to honor him with a share in his councils, America should always find in him a friend, &c. This I write, as it was agreeable to me to hear, and I suppose will be so to you to read. For his character has more in it of the frank honesty of the soldier, than of the plausible insincerity of the courtier; and therefore what he says is more to be depended on. The proprietor's dislike to my continuing in England, to be sure is very natural; as well as to the repeated choice of assembly men, not his friends; and probably he would, as they so little answer his purposes, wish to see elections as well as agencies abolished. They make him very unhappy, but it cannot be helped.

The proceedings in Boston, as the news came just upon the meeting of parliament, and occasioned great clamour here, gave me much concern. And as every offensive thing done in America is charged upon all, and every province though unconcerned in it, suffers in its interests through the general disgust given and the little distinction here made, it became

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necessary I thought to palliate the matter a little for our own sakes, and therefore I wrote the paper which probably you have seen printed in the Chronicle of January 7, and signed F+S.

Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

London, March 13, 1768.

DEAR SON,

I HAVE received all together your letters of January 6, 21, and 22: it had been a great while that I had not heard from you.

The purpose of settling the new colonies seem at present to be dropped, the change of American administration not appearing favorable to it. There seems rather to be an inclination to abandon the posts in the back country as more expensive than useful; but counsels are so continually fluctuating here that nothing can be depended on. The new secretary, my lord Hillsborough, is I find of opinion, that the troops should be placed, the chief part of them, in Canada and Florida, only three battalions to be quartered in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; and that forts Pitt, Oswego, Niagara, &c. should be left to the colonies to garrison and keep up, if they think it necessary, for the protection of their trade, &c. Probably his opinion may be followed if the new changes do not produce other ideas. As to my own sentiments, I am weary of suggesting them to so many different inattentive heads, though I must continue to do it while I stay among them. The letters from sir William Johnson, relating to the boundary, were at last found, and orders were sent over about Christmas for completing the purchase and settlement of it. My lord H. has promised me to send duplicates by this packet, and urge the speedy execution, as we represented to him the danger that these dissatisfactions of the Indians might produce a war. But I can tell you there

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are many here to whom the news of such a war would give pleasure; who speak of it as a thing to be wished; partly as a chastisement to the colonies, and partly to make them feel the want of protection from this country, and pray for it. For it is imagined that we could not possibly defend ourselves against the Indians without such assistance, so little is the state of America understood here.

My lord H. mentioned the Farmer's letters to me, said he had read them, that they were well written, and he believed he could guess who was the author, looking in my face at the same time as if he thought it was me. He censured the doctrines as extremely wild, &c. I have read them as far as No. 8. I know not if any more have been published. I should have thought they had been written by Mr. Delancey, not having heard any mention of the others you point out as joint authors. I am not yet master of the idea these and the New England writers have of the relation between Britain and her colonies. I know not what the Boston people mean by the "subordination" they acknowledge in their assembly to parliament, while they deny its power to make laws for them, nor what bounds the Farmer sets to the power he acknowledges in parliament to "regulate the trade of the colonies," it being difficult to draw lines between duties for regulation and those for revenue; and if the parliament is to be the judge, it seems to me that establishing such principles of distinction will amount to little. The more I have thought and read on the subject, the more I find myself confirmed in opinion, that no middle doctrine can be well maintained, I mean not clearly with intelligible arguments. Something might be made of either of the extremes; that parliament has a power to make *all laws* for us, or that it has a power to make *no laws* for us; and I think the arguments for the latter more numerous and weighty than those for the former. Supposing that doctrine established, the colonies would then be so many separate states, only subject to the same king, as England and Scotland were before the union. And then the

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question would be, whether a union like that with Scotland would or would not be advantageous to *the whole*. I should have no doubt of the affirmative, being fully persuaded that it would be best for *the whole*, and that though particular parts might find particular disadvantages in it, they would find greater advantages in the security arising to every part from the increased strength of the whole. But such union is not likely to take place while the nature of our present relation is so little understood on both sides the water, and sentiments concerning it remain so widely different. As to the Farmers' combating, as you say they intend to do, my opinion, that the parliament might lay duties though not impose internal taxes, I shall not give myself the trouble to defend it. Only to you, I may say, that not only the parliament of Britain, but every state in Europe claims and exercises a right of laying duties on the exportation of its own commodities to foreign countries. A duty is paid here on coals exported to Holland, and yet England has no right to lay an internal tax on Holland. All goods brought out of France to England, or any other country, are charged with a small duty in France, which the consumers pay, and yet France has no right to tax other countries. And in my opinion the grievance is not that Britain puts duties upon her own manufactures exported to us, but that she forbids us to buy the like manufactures from any other country. This she does, however, in virtue of her allowed right to regulate the commerce of the whole empire, allowed I mean by the Farmer, though I think whoever would dispute that right might, stand upon firmer ground and make much more of the argument: but my reasons are too many and too long for a letter.

Mr. Grenville complained in the house that the governors of New Jersey, New Hampshire, East and West Florida, had none of them obeyed the orders sent them, to give an account of the manufactures carried on in their respective provinces. Upon hearing this, I went after the house was up, and got a sight of the reports made by the other governors. They

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are all much in the same strain, that there are no manufactures of any consequence; in Massachusetts a little coarse woollen only, made in families for their own wear: glass and linen have been tried and failed. Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York much the same. Pennsylvania has tried a linen manufactory but it is dropped, it being imported cheaper; there is a glass-house in Lancaster county, but it makes only a little coarse ware for the country neighbors. Maryland is clothed all with English manufactures. Virginia the same, except that in their families they spin a little cotton of their own growing. South Carolina and Georgia none. All speak of the dearness of labor that makes manufactures impracticable. Only the governor of North Carolina parades with a large manufacture in his country, that may be useful to Britain of *pine boards;* they having fifty saw mills on one river. These accounts are very satisfactory here, and induce the parliament to despise and take no notice of the Boston resolutions. I wish you would send your account before the meeting of next parliament. You have only to report a glass-house for coarse window glass and bottles, and some domestic manufactures of linen and woollen for family use, that do not half clothe the inhabitants, all the finer goods coming from England and the like. I believe you will be puzzled to find any other, though I see great puffs in the papers.

The parliament is up and the nation in a ferment with the new elections. Great complaints are made that the natural interests of country gentlemen in their neighboring boroughs, is overborne by the monied interst of the new people who have got sudden fortunes in the Indies, or as contractors, &c. *four thousand pounds* is now the *market price* for a borough. In short this whole venal nation is now at market, will be sold for about two millions; and might be bought out of the hands of the present bidders (if he would offer half a million more) by the very devil himself.

I shall wait on lord H. again next Wednesday, on behalf of the sufferers by Indian and French depredations, to have an

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allowance of lands out of any new grant made by the Indians, so long solicited (and perhaps still to be solicited) in vain.

I am your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

I dined yesterday with general Monckton, major Gates, colonel Lee, and other officers who have served in and are friends of America. Monckton inquired kindly after your welfare.

To the Committee of Correspondence, Pennsylvania.

London, March 13, 1768.

GENTLEMEN,

ON receipt of your letter of January 20, Mr. Jackson and myself waited on lord Hillsborough, the new secretary of state for American affairs, and communicated to him the contents, pressing the necessity of enforcing the orders already sent to sir William Johnson, for immediately settling the affair of the boundary line with the Indians. His lordship was pleased to assure us, that he would cause duplicates of the orders to be forwarded by this packet, and urge the completion of them.

We communicated also the copy of general Gage's letter, and the messages that had passed between the governor and the house thereupon. His lordship acquainted us that a letter from governor Penn had been shown him by the proprietor, importing that a horrid murder had lately been committed on the Indians, upon which the governor had issued a proclamation for appprehending the murderer; and that a bill was under his and the council's consideration to prevent future settlements on Indian lands. But his lordship remarked that these messages had not been communicated to him by the proprietor.

Government here begins to grow tired of the enormous expense of Indian affairs, and of maintaining posts in the Indian country, and it is now talked of as a proper measure to abandon these posts, demolishing all but such as the colo-

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nies may think fit to keep up at their own expense; and also to return the management of their own Indian affairs into the hands of the respective provinces as formerly. What the result will be, is uncertain, counsels here being so continually fluctuating. But I have urged often, that after taking those affairs out of our hands, it seems highly incumbent on the ministry not to neglect them, but to see that they are well managed and the Indians kept in peace. I think however that we should not too much depend on their doing this, but look to the matter a little ourselves, taking every opportunity of conciliating the affections of the Indians, by seeing that they always have justice done them, and sometimes kindness. For I can assure you that here are not wanting people, who though not now in the ministry, no one knows how soon they may be; and if they were ministers, would take no step to prevent an Indian war in the colonies; being of opinion, which they express openly, that it would be a very good thing, in the first place to chastise the colonists for their undutifulness, and then to make them sensible of the necesssity of protection by the troops of this country.

Mr. Jackson being now taken up with his election business, will hardly have time to write by this opportunity. But he joins with me in respects to you and the assembly, and assurances of our most faithful services.

I am, gentlemen, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

London, March 13, 1768.

I WROTE to you very fully per Falconer, of February 17, and have since received yours of January 21, together with one from the committee, and the messages which, as you will see by my answer to the committee, I communicated to lord Hillsborough. His lordship read them deliberately, and took notice that the message of the assembly seemed to insinuate that the governor had been tardy in bringing the former murder-

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ers to justice, which gave me an opportunity of explaining that matter to him; whereby he might also understand why the proprietor had not shown him the messages when he communicated the governor's letter concerning the Indian uneasinesses, the law under his consideration for removing them, the late murder, and his proclamation. I shall wait on his lordship again next Wednesday, on our affairs, and show him moreover your letter with some other papers.

The old parliament is gone, and its enemies now find themselves at liberty to abuse it. I inclose you a pamphlet, published the very hour of its prorogation. All the members are now in their counties and boroughs among their drunken electors; much confusion and disorder in many places, and such profusion of money as never was known before on any similar occasion. The first instance of bribery to be chosen a member, taken notice of on the Journals, is no longer ago than queen Elizabeth's time, when the being sent to parliament was looked upon as a troublesome service, and therefore not sought after, it is said that such a one, "being a simple man, and conceiving it might be of some advantage to him, had given *four pounds* to the mayor and corporation that they might choose him to serve them in parliament."

The price is monstrously risen since that time, for it is now no less than *four thousand pounds!* It is thought that near two millions will be spent this election; but those who understand figures and act by computation, say the crown has *two millions a-year in places and pensions to dispose of,* and it is well worth while to engage in such a seven years' lottery, though all that have tickets should not get prizes.

I am, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Committee of Correspondence, Pennsylvania.

London, Saturday, April 16, 1768.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE just received your favor of February 20, directed to Mr. Jackson and myself, containing instructions for our

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conduct relating to the application for a repeal of the duty act, to the change of government, and to the legal tender of paper money; which instructions we shall observe to the best of our abilities. Mr. Jackson has read your letter, and is now reading the messages and other papers transmitted to us, which we shall lay before the secretaries of state on Monday, and thereupon press the necessity of a change in the administration of our province. The parliament will have a short session, it is said, in May, when if any application is made for the repeal of that act, by the agents of the other colonies, we shall join them heartily, and do what we can likewise in the affair of paper money. In the mean time should an Indian war make it necessary to emit paper money with a legal tender, it may be considered how far the fourth clause in the act of the 24 Geo. II. might give countenance to your providing in that way for the emergency; that act not being altered or repealed by any later, it seems as if the parliament thought that clause not improper, though they have not expressly made the same provision for the other colonies. The mail being to go this evening, I can only add, that I am with the utmost respect for you and the assembly, gentlemen, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

London, April 16, 1768.

DEAR SON,

SINCE my last, a long one, of March 13, nothing has been talked or thought of here but elections. There have been amazing contests all over the kingdom, *twenty* or *thirty thousand pounds* of a side spent in several places, and inconceivable mischief done by debauching the people and making them idle, besides the immediate actual mischief done by drunken mad mobs to houses, windows, &c. The scenes have been horrible. London was illuminated two nights running at the command of the mob for the success of Wilkes, in the

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Middlesex election; the second night exceeded any thing of the kind ever seen here on the greatest occasions of rejoicing, as even the small cross streets, lanes, courts, and other out-of-the-way places were all in a blaze with lights, and the principal streets all night long, as the mobs went round again after two o'clock, and obliged people who had extinguished their candles to light them again. Those who refused had all their windows destroyed. The damage done and expense of candles has been computed at *fifty thousand pounds;* it must have been great, though probably not so much. The ferment is not yet over, for he has promised to surrender himself to the court next Wednesday, and another tumult is then expected; and what the upshot will be no one can yet foresee. 'Tis really an extraordinary event to see an outlaw and an exile, of bad personal character, not worth a farthing, come over from France, set himself up as candidate for the capital of the kingdom, miss his election only by being too late in his application, and immediately carrying it for the principal county. The mob, (spirited up by numbers of different ballads sung or roared in every street) requiring gentlemen and ladies of all ranks as they passed in their carriages to shout for Wilkes and liberty, marking the same words on all their coaches with chalk, and No. 45 on every door; which extends a vast way along the roads into the country. I went last week to Winchester, and observed that for fifteen miles out of town, there was scarce a door or window shutter next the road unmarked; and this continued here and there quite to Winchester, which is sixty-four miles.

To Mr. Ross, Philadelphia.

London, May 14, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your favor of March 13, and am extremely concerned at the disorders on our frontiers, and at the debility or wicked connivance of our government and magistrates, which must make property and even life more and more inse-

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cure among us, if some effectual remedy is not speedily applied. I have laid all the accounts before the ministry here. I wish I could procure more attention to them. I have urged over and over the necessity of the change we desire; but this country itself being at present in a situation very little better, weakens our argument that a royal government would be better managed and safer to live under than that of a proprietary. Even this capital, the residence of the king, is now a daily scene of lawless riot and confusion. Mobs patrolling the streets at noon-day, some knocking all down that will not roar for Wilkes and liberty; courts of justice afraid to give judgment against him; coal-heavers and porters pulling down the houses of coal merchants, that refuse to give them more wages; sawyers destroying saw mills; sailors unrigging all the outward bound ships, and suffering none to sail till merchants agree to raise their pay; watermen destroying private boats and threatening bridges; soldiers firing among the mobs and killing men, women and children, which seems only to have produced an universal sullenness, that looks like a great black cloud coming on, ready to burst in a general tempest. What the event will be God only knows. But some punishment seems preparing for a people who are ungratefully abusing the best constitution and the best king any nation was ever blessed with, intent on nothing but luxury, licentiousness, power, places, pensions, and plunder; while the ministry divided in their councils, with little regard for each other, worried by perpetual oppositions, in continual apprehension of changes, intent on securing popularity in case they should lose favor, have for some years past had little time or inclination to attend to our small affairs, whose remoteness makes them appear still smaller.

The bishops here are very desirous of securing the Church of England in America, and promoting its interest and enlargement by sending one of their order thither: but though they have long solicited this point with government here,

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they have not as yet been able to obtain it. So apprehensive are ministers of engaging in any novel measure.

I hope soon to have an opportunity of conferring with you, and therefore say no more at present on this subject.

I am, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

London, May 14, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your favor of March 31. It is now with the messages, &c. in the hands of the minister, so that I cannot be more particular at present in answering it than to say, I should have a melancholy prospect in going home to such public confusion, if I did not leave greater confusion behind me. The newspapers, and my letter of this day to Mr. Ross, will inform you of the miserable situation this country is in. While I am writing, a great mob of coal porters fill the street, carrying a wretch of their business upon poles to be ducked, and otherwise punished at their pleasure for working at the old wages. All respect to law and government seems to be lost among the common people, who are moreover continually enflamed by seditious scribblers, to trample on authority and every thing that used to keep them in order.

The parliament is now sitting, but will not continue long together, nor undertake any material business. The court of king's bench postponed giving sentence against Wilkes on his outlawry till the next term, intimidated as some say by his popularity, and willing to get rid of the affair for a time, till it should be seen what the parliament would conclude as to his membership. The commons, at least some of them, resent that conduct, which has thrown a burthen on them it might have eased them of, by pillorying or punishing him in some infamous manner, that would have given better ground for expelling him the house. His friends complain of it as a delay of justice, say the court knew the outlawry to be de-

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fective, and that they must finally pronounce it void, but would punish him by long confinement. Great mobs of his adherents have assembled before the prison, the guards have fired on them: it is said five or six are killed, and sixteen or seventeen wounded, and some circumstances have attended this military execution, such as its being done by the Scotch regiment, the pursuing a lad, and killing him at his father's house, &c. &c. that exasperate people exceedingly, and more mischief seems brewing. Several of the soldiers are imprisoned. If they are not hanged, it is feared there will be more and greater mobs; and if they are, that no soldier will assist in suppressing any mob hereafter. The prospect either way is gloomy. It is said the English soldiers cannot be confided in to act against these mobs, being suspected as rather inclined to favor and join them.

I am preparing for my return and hope for the pleasure of finding you well, when I shall have an opportunity of communicating to you more particularly the state of things here relating to our American affairs, which I cannot so well do by letter. I inclose you a report of sir M. L. counsel to the board of trade, on one of your late acts. I suppose it has had its effect, so that the repeal will be of little consequence.

In the mean time I am with sincere esteem and affection, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

London, July 2, 1768.

DEAR SON,

SINCE my last I have received yours of May 10, dated at Amboy, which I shall answer particularly by next week's packet. I purpose now to take notice of that part wherein you say it was reported at Philadelphia I was to be appointed to a certain office here, which my friends all wished, but you did not believe it for the reason I had mentioned. Instead of my being appointed to a new office, there has been a mo-

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tion made to deprive me of that I now hold, and I believe for the same reason, though that was not the reason given out, viz. my being too much of an American; but, as it came from lord Sandwich, our new post-master general, who is of the Bedford party, and a friend of Mr. Grenville, I have no doubt that the reason he gave out, viz. my non-residence, was only the pretence, and that the other was the true reason; especially as it is the practice in many other instances to allow the non-residence of American officers who spend their salaries here, provided care is taken that the business be done by deputy or otherwise.

The first notice I had of this was from my fast friend Mr. Cooper, secretary of the treasury. He desired me by a little note to call upon him there, which I did, when he told me, that the duke of Grafton had mentioned to him some discourse of lord Sandwich's, as if the office suffered by my absence, and that it would be fit to appoint another, as I seemed constantly to reside in England: that Mr. Todd, secretary of the post-office, had also been with the duke, talking to the same purpose, &c. That the duke had wished him (Mr. Cooper) to mention this to me, and to say to me at the same time, that though my going to my post might remove the objection, yet if I choose rather to reside in England, my merit was such in his opinion, as to entitle me to something better here, and it should not be his fault if I was not well provided for. I told Mr. Cooper that without having heard any exception had been taken to my residence here, I was really preparing to return home, and expected to be gone in a few weeks. That however I was extremely sensible of the duke's goodness, in giving me this intimation, and very thankful for his favorable disposition towards me; that having lived long in England, and contracted a friendship and affection for many persons here, it could not but be agreeable to me to remain among them some time longer, if not for the rest of my life; and that there was no nobleman to whom I could from sincere respect for his great abilities, and amiable qualities, so cordially attach myself, or to whom I should so willingly

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be obliged for the provision he mentioned, as to the duke of Grafton, if his grace should think I could, in any station where he might place me, be serviceable to him and to the public. Mr. Cooper said he was very glad to hear I was still willing to remain in England, as it agreed so perfectly with his inclinations to keep me here. Wished me to leave my name at the duke of Grafton's as soon as possible, and to be at the treasury again the next board day. I accordingly called at the duke's, and left my card; and when I went next to the treasury, his grace not being there, Mr. Cooper carried me to lord North, chancellor of the exchequer, who said very obligingly, after talking of some American affairs, I am told by Mr. Cooper that you are not unwilling to stay with us, I hope we shall find some way of making it worth your while. I thanked his lordship, and said I should stay with pleasure if I could any ways be useful to government. He made me a compliment, and I took my leave, Mr. Cooper carrying me away with him to his country house at Richmond to dine and stay all night. He then told me that Mr. Todd had been again at the duke of Grafton's, and that upon his (Mr. Cooper's) speaking in my behalf, Mr. Todd had changed his style, and said I had to be sure a great deal of merit with the office, having by my good management regulated the posts in America, so as greatly to increase the revenue; that he had had great satisfaction in corresponding with me while I was there, and he believed they never had a better officer, &c. The Thursday following, being the birth-day, I met with Mr. Todd at court; he was very civil, took me with him in his coach to the king's arms in the city, where I had been invited to dine by Mr. Trevor, with the gentlemen of the post-office; we had a good deal of chat after dinner between us two, in which he told me, lord Sandwich (who was very sharp) had taken notice of my stay in England, and said if *one* could do the business, why should there be *two*, &c. On my telling Mr. Todd that I was going home, (which I still say to every body, not knowing but that what is intimated above may fail of taking effect) he looked blank and seemed dis-

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concerted a little, which makes me think some friend of his was to have been vested with my place; but this is surmise only. We parted very good friends. That day I received another note from Mr. Cooper, directing me to be at the duke of Grafton's next morning, whose porter had orders to let me in. I went accordingly, and was immediately admitted. But his grace being then engaged in some unexpected business, with much condescension and politeness made that apology for his not discoursing with me then, but wished me to be at the treasury at twelve the next Tuesday. I went accordingly, when Mr. Cooper told me something had called the duke into the country, and the board was put off, which was not known till it was too late to send me word; but was glad I was come, as he might then fix another day for me to go again with him into the country; the day fixed was Thursday. I returned yesterday, should have stayed till Monday, but for writing by these vessels. He assures me the duke has it at heart to do something handsome for me. Sir John Pringle, who is anxious for my stay, says, Mr. Cooper is the honestest man of a courtier that he ever knew, and he is persuaded they are in earnest to keep me. The piece I wrote against smuggling, in the Chronicle of November last, and one in April, on the laboring poor (you will find in the Gentleman's Magazine for that month) have been lately shown by Mr. Cooper to the chancellor of the exchequer, and to the duke, who have expressed themselves much pleased with them. I am to be again at the treasury on Tuesday next, by appointment of Mr. Cooper. Thus particular I have been, that you may judge of this affair. For my own thoughts, I must tell you that though I did not think fit to decline any favor so great a man expressed an inclination to do me, because at court if one shows an unwillingness to be obliged it is often construed as a mark of mental hostility, and one makes an enemy; yet so great is my inclination to be at home, and at rest, that I shall not be sorry if this business falls through, and I am suffered to retire with my old post; nor indeed very sorry if they take that from me too on account of my zeal for America, in

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which some of my friends have hinted to me that I have been too open. I shall soon be able, I hope, by the next packet, to give you farther light. In the mean time, as no one but sir J. knows of the treaty, I talk daily of going in the August packet at farthest. And when the late Georgia appointment of me to be their agent is mentioned as what may detain me, I say, I have yet received no letters from that assembly, acquainting me what their business may be; that I shall probably hear from them before that packet sails. That if it is extraordinary and of such a nature as to make my stay another winter necessary, I may possibly stay, because there would not be time for them to choose another; but if it is common business, I shall leave it with Mr. Jackson and proceed. I do not, by the way, know how that appointment came about, having no acquaintance that I can recollect in that country. It has been mentioned in the papers some time, but I have only just now received a letter from governor Wright, informing me that he had that day given his assent to it, and expressing his desire to correspond with me on all occasions, saying the committee, as soon as they could get their papers ready, would write to me and acquaint me with their business. We have lost lord Clare from the board of trade. He took me home from court, the Sunday before his removal, that I might dine with him as he said alone, and talk over American affairs. He seemed as attentive to them as if he was to continue ever so long. He gave me a great deal of flummery; saying, that though at my examination I answered some of his questions a little pertly, yet he liked me from that day, for the spirit I showed in defence of my country; and at parting, after we had drank a bottle and a half of claret each, he hugged and kissed me, protesting he never in his life met with a man he was so much in love with. This I write for your amusement. You see by the nature of this whole letter that it is to yourself only. It may serve to prepare your mind for any event that shall happen. If Mr. Grenville comes into power again, in any department respecting America, I must refuse to accept of any thing that may seem to

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put me in his power, because I apprehend a breach between the two countries; and that refusal might give offence. So that you see a turn of a die may make a great difference in our affairs. We may be either promoted, or discarded; one or the other seems likely soon to be the case, but it is hard to divine which. I am myself grown so old as to feel much less than formerly the spur of ambition, and if it were not for the flattering expectation, that by being fixed here I might more effectually serve my country, I should certainly determine for retirement, without a moment's hesitation.

I am as ever, your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

London, July 2, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

SINCE my last nothing material has occurred here, relating to American affairs, except the removal of lord Clare from the head of the board of trade to the treasury of Ireland, and the return of lord Hillsborough to the board of trade as first commissioner, retaining the title and powers of secretary of state for the colonies. This change was very sudden and unexpected. My lord Clare took me home from court to dine with him but two days before, saying he should be without other company, and wanted to talk with me on sundry American businesses. We had accordingly a good deal of conversation on our affairs, in which he seemed to interest himself with all the attention that could be supposed in a minister who expected to continue in the management of them. This was on Sunday, and on the Tuesday following he was removed. Whether my lord Hillsborough's administration will be more stable than others have been for a long time is quite uncertain; but as his inclinations are rather favorable towards us (so far as he thinks consistent with what he supposes the unquestionable rights of Britain), I cannot but wish it may continue, especially as these perpetual mutations prevent the progress of all business.

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But another change is now talked of that gives me great uneasiness. Several of the Bedford party being now got in, it has been for some time apprehended that they would sooner or later draw their friend Mr. Grenville in after them. It is now said, he is to be secretary of state, in the room of lord Shelburne. If this should take place, or if in any other shape he comes again into power, I fear his sentiments of the Americans, and theirs of him, will occasion such clashings as may be attended with fatal consequences. The last accounts from your part of the world, of the combinations relating to commerce with this country, and resolutions concerning the duties here laid upon it, occasion much serious reflection, and 'tis thought the points in dispute between the two countries will not fail to come under the consideration of parliament early in next session. Our friends wonder that I persist in my intention of returning this summer, alleging that I might be of much more service to my country here than I can be there, and wishing me by all means to stay the ensuing winter, as the presence of persons well acquainted with America, and of ability to represent these affairs in a proper light, will then be highly necessary. My private concerns, however, so much require my presence at home, that I have not yet suffered myself to be persuaded by their partial opinion of me.

The tumults and disorders that prevailed here lately, have now pretty well subsided. Wilkes's outlawry is reversed, but he is sentenced to twenty-two months imprisonment, and *one thousand pounds* fine, which his friends, who feared he would be pilloried, seem rather satisfied with. The importation of corn, a pretty good hay harvest, now near over, and the prospect of plenty from a fine crop of wheat, makes the poor more patient, in hopes of an abatement in the price of provisions; so that unless want of employment by the failure of American orders should distress them, they are like to be tolerably quiet.

I purpose writing to you again by the packet that goes next Saturday, and therefore now only add that I am, with

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sincere esteem, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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*To * * *.*

London, Nov. 28, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your obliging favor of the 12th instant. Your sentiments of the importance of the present dispute between Great Britain and the colonies, appear to me extremely just. There is nothing I wish for more than to see it amicably and equitably settled.

But Providence will bring about its own ends by its own means; and if it intends the downfal of a nation, that nation will be so blinded by its pride, and other passions, as not to see its danger, or how its fall may be prevented.

Being born and bred in one of the countries, and having lived long and made many agreeable connections of friendship in the other, I wish all prosperity to both; but I have talked, and written so much and so long on the subject, that my acquaintance are weary of hearing, and the public of reading any more of it, which begins to make me weary of talking and writing; especially as I do not find that I have gained any point, in either country, except that of rendering myself suspected, by my impartiality; in England, of being too much an American, and in America, of being too much an Englishman. Your opinion, however, weighs with me, and encourages me to try one effort more, in a full, though concise statement of facts, accompanied with arguments drawn from those facts; to be published about the meeting of parliament, after the holidays.*

If any good may be done I shall rejoice; but at present I almost despair.

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* Uncertain what is the publication promised in this letter; unless it alludes to the one entitled "Causes of the American Discontents before 1768."

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Have you ever seen the barometer so low as of late? The 22d instant mine was at 28, 41, and yet the weather fine and fair.

With sincere esteem, I am, dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To M. Dubourg,[b] *Paris.*

London, October 2, 1770.

I SEE with pleasure, that we think pretty much alike on the subjects of English America. We of the colonies have never insisted that we ought to be exempt from contributing to the common expenses necessary to support the prosperity of the empire. We only assert, that having parliaments of our own, and not having representatives in that of Great Britain, our parliaments are the only judges of what we can and what we ought to contribute in this case; and that the English parliament has no right to take our money without our consent. In fact, the British empire is not a single state, it comprehends many; and though the parliament of Great Britain has arrogated to itself the power of taxing the colonies, it has no more right to do so, than it has to tax Hanover. We have the same king, but not the same legislatures.

The dispute between the two countries has already lost England many millions sterling, which it has lost in its commerce, and America has in this respect been a proportionable gainer. This commerce consisted principally of superfluities; objects of luxury and fashion, which we can well do without; and the resolution we have formed of importing no more till our grievances are redressed, has enabled many of our infant manufactures to take root; and it will not be easy to make our people abandon them in future, even should a connection more cordial than ever succeed the present trou-

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[b] Translator of Dr. Franklin's Philosophical Works.

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bles. I have indeed, no doubt that the parliament of England will finally abandon its present pretensions, and leave us to the peaceable enjoyment of our rights and privileges.

To Governor Franklin.

London, Aug. 17, 1772.

DEAR SON,

AT length we have got rid of lord Hillsborough, and lord Dartmouth takes his place, to the great satisfaction of all the friends of America. You will hear it said among you (I suppose) that the interest of the Ohio planters has ousted him, but the truth is, what I wrote you long since, that all his brother ministers disliked him extremely, and wished for a fair occasion of tripping up his heels; so seeing that he made a point of defeating our scheme, they made another of supporting it, on purpose to mortify him, which they knew his pride could not bear. I do not mean they would have done this if they had thought our proposal bad in itself, or his opposition well founded; but I believe if he had been on good terms with them, they would not have differed with him for so small a matter. The king too was tired of him and of his administration, which had weakened the affection and respect of the colonies for a royal government, with which (I may say it to you) I used proper means from time to time that his majesty should have due information and convincing proofs. More of this when I see you. The king's dislike made the others more firmly united in the resolution of disgracing H., by setting at nought his famous report. But now that business is done, perhaps our affair may be less regarded in the cabinet and suffered to linger, and possibly may yet miscarry. Therefore let us beware of every word and action, that may betray a confidence in its success, lest we render ourselves ridiculous in case of disappointment. We are now pushing for a completion of the business, but the time is unfavorable, every body gone or going into the country, which gives room for accidents.

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I am writing by Falconer, and therefore in this only add that I am ever your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. The regard lord Dartmouth has always done me the honor to express for me, gives me room to hope being able to obtain more in favor of our colonies upon occasion, than I could for some time past.

To the same.

London, August 19, 1772.

DEAR SON,

I RECEIVED yours of June 30. I am vexed that my letter to you, written at Glasgow, miscarried; not so much that you did not receive it, as that it is probably in other hands. It contained some accounts of what passed in Ireland, which were for you only.

As lord Hillsborough in fact got nothing out of me, I should rather suppose he threw me away as an orange that would yield no juice, and therefore not worth more squeezing. When I had been a little while returned to London, I waited on him to thank him for his civilities in Ireland, and to discourse with him on a Georgia affair. The porter told me he was not at home. I left my card, went another time, and received the same answer, though I knew he was at home, a friend of mine being with him. After intermissions of a week each, I made two more visits, and received the same answer. The last time was on a levee day, when a number of carriages were at his door. My coachman driving up, alighted and was opening the coach door, when the porter, seeing me, came out, and surlily chid the coachman for opening the door before he had inquired whether my lord was at home; and then turning to me, said, "My lord is not at home." I have never since been nigh him, and we have only abused one another at a distance. The contrast, as you observe, is very striking between his conversation with the chief justice, and his letter to you concerning your province. I know him to

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be as double and deceitful as any man I ever met with. But we have done with him, I hope, for ever. His removal has I believe been meditated ever since the death of the princess Dowager. For I recollect, that on my complaning of him about that time to a friend at court, whom you may guess, he told me, we Americans were represented by Hillsborough as an unquiet people, not easily satisfied with any ministry, that however it was thought too much occasion had been given us to dislike the present: and asked me, whether, if he should be removed I could name another likely to be more acceptable to us. I said, yes, there is lord Dartmouth: we liked him very well when he was at the head of the board formerly, and probably should like him again. This I heard no more of, but I am pretty sure it was reported where I could wish it, though I know not that it had any effect.

As to my situation here, nothing can be more agreeable, especially as I hope for less embarrassment from the new minister. A general respect paid me by the learned, a number of friends and acquaintance among them with whom I have a pleasing intercourse; a character of so much weight that it has protected me when some in power would have done me injury, and continued me in an office they would have deprived me of; my company is so much desired that I seldom dine at home in winter, and could spend the whole summer in the country-houses of inviting friends if I chose it. Learned and ingenious foreigners that come to England, almost all make a point of visiting me, for my reputation is still higher abroad than here; several of the foreign ambassadors have assiduously cultivated my acquaintance, treating me as one of their *corps*, partly I believe from the desire they have from time to time of hearing something of American affairs, an object become of importance in foreign courts, who begin to hope Britain's alarming power will be diminished by the defection of her colonies; and partly that they may have an opportunity of introducing me to the gentlemen of their country who desire it. The king too has lately been heard to speak of me with great regard. These are flattering circum-

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stances, but a violent longing for home sometimes seizes me, which I can no otherways subdue but by promising myself a return next spring or next fall, and so forth. As to returning hither if I once go back, I have no thoughts of it. I am too far advanced in life to propose three voyages more. I have some important affairs to settle at home, and considering my double expenses here and there, I hardly think my salaries fully compensate the disadvantages. The late change however being thrown into the balance determines me to stay another winter.

PS. August 22. I find I omitted congratulating you on the honor of your election into the Society for propagating the Gospel. There you match indeed my Dutch honor. But you are again behind, for last night I received a letter from Paris of which the inclosed is an extract, acquainting me that I am chosen *Associé etranger* (foreign member) of the Royal Academy there. There are but eight of these *Associés etrangers* in all Europe, and those of the most distinguished names for science. The vacancy I have the honor of filling, was made by the death of the late celebrated M. Van Swieten of Vienna. This mark of respect from the first academy in the world, which abbe Nolet, one of its members, took so much pains to prejudice against my doctrines, I consider as a kind of victory without ink-shed, since I never answered him. I am told he has but one of his sect now remaining in the academy. All the rest who have in any degree acquainted themselves with electricity, are as he calls them Franklinists.

Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

London, August 22, 1772.

DEAR FRIEND,

I ACKNOWLEDGED before the receipt of your favor of May 14, since which I have no line from you. It will be a pleasure to render any service to Mr. Tilghman whom you recommended.

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The acts passed in your winter and spring sessions I have not yet received, nor have I heard from Mr. Wilmot that they have been presented.

Lord Hillsborough, mortified by the committee of council's approbation of our grant, in opposition to his report, has resigned. I believe when he offered to do so, he had such an opinion of his importance that he did not think it would be accepted; and that it would be thought prudent rather to set our grant aside than part with him. His colleagues in the ministry were all glad to get rid of him, and perhaps for this reason joined more readily in giving him that mortification. Lord Dartmouth succeeds him, who has much more favorable dispositions towards the colonies. He has heretofore expressed some personal regard for me, and I hope now to find our business with the board more easy to transact.

Your observations on the state of the Islands did not come to hand till after lord Rochford had withdrawn his petition. His lordship and the promoters of it were so roasted on the occasion, that I believe another of the kind will not very soon be thought of. The proprietor was at the expense of the opposition, and as I knew it would not be necessary, and thought it might be inconvenient to our affairs, I did not openly engage in it, but I gave some private assistance that I believe was not without effect; I think too that Mr. Jackson's opinion was of great service. I would lodge a copy of your paper in the plantation office against any similar future applications if you approve of it. I only think the Island holders make too great a concession to the crown, when they suppose it may have a right to quit-rent. It can have none in my opinion on the old grants from Indians, Swedes, and Dutch, where none was reserved. And I think those grants so clearly good as to need no confirmation; to obtain which I suppose is the only motive for offering such quit-rent. I imagine too, that it may not be amiss to affix a caveat in the plantation office in the behalf of holders of property in those islands, against any grant of them that may be applied for, till they have had timely notice, and an opportunity of being fully

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heard. Mr. Jackson is out of town, but I shall confer with him on the subject as soon as he returns.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

London, Dec. 2, 1772.

DEAR FRIEND,

I AM glad you are returned again to a seat in the assembly, where your abilities are so useful and necessary in the service of your country. We must not in the course of *public* life expect *immediate* approbation and *immediate* grateful acknowledgment of our services. But let us persevere through abuse and even injury. The internal satisfaction of a good conscience is always present, and time will do us justice in the minds of the people, even those at present the most prejudiced against us.

I have given Dr. Denormandie a recommendation to a friend in Geneva, for which place he set out this morning; and I shall be glad of any opportunity of serving him when he returns to London. I see by the Pennsylvania Gazette, of October 21, that you are continued speaker, and myself agent, but I have no line from you or the committee relative to instructions. Perhaps I shall hear from you by Falconer. I find myself upon very good terms with our new minister lord Dartmouth, who we have reason to think means well to the colonies. I believe all are now sensible that nothing is to be got by contesting with or oppressing us. Two circumstances have diverted me lately. One was, that being at the court of exchequer on some business of my own, I there met with one of the commissioners of the stamp-office, who told me he attended with a memorial from that board, to be allowed in their accounts the difference between their expense in endeavoring to establish those offices in America, and the amount of what they received, which from Canada and the West India islands

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was but about *fifteen hundred pounds*, while the expense if I remember right was above *twelve thousand pounds*, being for stamps and stamping, with paper and parchment returned upon their hands, freight, &c. The other is the present difficulties of the India company and of government on their account. The company have accepted bills which they find themselves unable to pay, though they have the value of two millions in tea and other India goods in their stores, perishing under a want of demand. Their credit thus suffering, and their stock falling one hundred and twenty per cent, whereby the government will lose the *four hundred thousand pounds* per annum, it having been stipulated that it should no longer be paid if the dividend fell to that mark. And although it is known that the American market is lost by continuing the duty on tea, and that we are supplied by the Dutch, who doubtless take the opportunity of smuggling other India goods among us with the tea, so that for the five years past we might probably have otherwise taken off the greatest part of what the company have on hand, and so have prevented their present embarrassment, yet the honor of government is supposed to forbid the repeal of the American tea duty; while the amount of all the duties goes on decreasing, so that the balance of this year does not (as I have it from good authority) exceed eighty pounds, after paying the collection; not reckoning the immense expense of guarda costas, &c. Can an American help smiling at these blunders?—though in a national light they are truly deplorable.

With the sincerest esteem and inviolable attachment, I am, my dear friend, ever most affectionately yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable Thomas Cushing, Esq.

London, Dec. 2, 1772.

SIR,

THE above is a copy of my last. A few days after my leaving your petition with lord Dartmouth, his lordship sent

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for me to discourse with me upon it. After a long audience, he was pleased to say, that notwithstanding all I had said or could say, in support and justification of the petition, he was sure the presenting it at this time could not possibly produce any good: that the king would be exceedingly offended, but what steps his majesty would take upon it was uncertain; perhaps he would require the opinion of the judges or government lawyers, which would surely be against us; perhaps he might lay it before parliament, and so the censure of both houses would be drawn down upon us: the most favorable thing to be expected was, a severe reprimand to the assembly, by order of his majesty, the natural consequence of which must be more discontent and uneasiness in the province. That possessed as he was with great good will for New England, he was extremely unwilling that one of the first acts of his administration, with regard to the Massachusetts, should be of so unpleasant a nature. That minds had been heated and irritated on both sides the water, but he hoped those heats were now cooling, and he was averse to the addition of fresh fuel; that as I had delivered the petition to him officially, he must present it if I insisted upon it; but he wished I would first consult my constituents, who might possibly, on reconsideration, think fit to order its being deferred. I answered that the great majority with which the petition and the resolves on which it was founded were carried through the house, made it scarce expectable that their order would be countermanded; that the slighting, evading, or refusing to receive petitions from the colonies, on some late occasions by the parliament, had occasioned a total loss of the respect for and confidence in that body, formerly subsisting so strongly in America, and brought on a questioning of their authority: that his lordship might observe that petitions came no more from thence to parliament, but to the king only: that the king appeared now to be the only connection between the two countries; and that as a continued union was essentially necessary to the well-being of the whole empire, I should be sorry to see that link weakened, as the other had been; that I thought it a dangerous thing for any government

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to refuse receiving petitions, and thereby prevent the subjects from giving vent to their griefs. His lordship interrupted me by replying, that he did not refuse to deliver the petition; that it should never justly be said of him, that he interrupted the complaints of his majesty's subjects; and that he must and would present it, as he had said before, whenever I should absolutely require it; but for motives of pure good will to the province, he wished me not to insist on it till I should receive fresh orders. Finally, considering that since the petition was ordered, there had been a change in the American administration, that the present minister was our friend in the repeal of the stamp act, and seems still to have good dispositions towards us; that you had mentioned to me the probability that the house would have remonstrated on all their other grievances, had not their time been taken up with the difficult business of a general valuation; and since the complaint of this petition was likely alone to give offence, it might perhaps be judged advisable to give the substance of all our complaints at once, rather than in parts and after a reprimand received; I say, upon the whole I thought it best not to disoblige him in the beginning of his administration, by refusing him what he seemed so desirous of, a delay at least in presenting the petition, till farther directions should be received from my constituents. If after deliberation they should send me fresh orders I shall immediately obey them, and the application to the crown itself may possibly derive greater weight, from the reconsideration given it, while the temper of the house may be somewhat calmed by the removal of a minister who had rendered himself so obnoxious to them. Accordingly I consented to the delay desired, wherein I hope my conduct will not be disapproved.

With the greatest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your and the committee's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the same. (Private.)

London, Jan. 5, 1773.

SIR,

I DID myself the honor of writing to you on the 2d of December past, inclosing some original letters from persons in Boston, which I hope got safe to hand. I have since received your favor of October 27, which containing in a small compass so full an enumeration of our grievances, the steps necessary to remove them, and the happy effects that must follow, I thought that though marked *private*, it might be of use to communicate it to lord Dartmouth, the rather too, as he would there find himself occasionally mentioned with proper respect, and learn that his character was esteemed in the colonies. Accordingly I wrote him a few lines, and inclosed it a day or two before I was to wait on his lordship, that he might have a little time to consider the contents. When I next attended him, he returned me the letter with great complacence in his countenance, said he was glad to find that people in America were disposed to think so favorably of him; that they did him but justice in believing he had the best disposition towards them, for he wished sincerely their welfare, though possibly he might not always think with them as to the means of obtaining that end. That the heads of complaint in your letter were many, some of them requiring much consideration, and therefore it could scarce be expected that a sudden change should be made in so many measures, supposing them all improper to be continued, which perhaps might not be the case. It was however his opinion that if the Americans continued quiet, and gave no fresh offence to government, those measures would be reconsidered, and such relief given as upon consideration should be thought reasonable. I need not remark that there is not much in such general discourse, but I could then obtain nothing more particular, except that his lordship expressed in direct terms his disapprobation of the instruction for exempting the colonies from taxation: which however was, as he said, in confidence to me,

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relying that no public mention should be made of his opinion on that head.

In the mean time, some circumstances are working in our favor with regard to the duties. It is found by the last year's accounts transmitted by the commissioners, that the balance in favor of Britain is but about eighty-five pounds, after payment of salaries, &c. exclusive of the charge of a fleet to enforce the collection. Then it is observed, that the India company is so out of cash, that it cannot pay the bills drawn upon it, and its other debts, and at the same time so out of credit, that the bank does not care to assist them, whence they find themselves obliged to lower their dividend; the apprehension of which has sunk their stock from two hundred and eighty to one hundred and sixty, whereby several millions of property are annihilated, occasioning private bankruptcies and other distress, besides a loss to the public treasury of four hundred thousand pounds per annum, which the company are not to pay into it as heretofore, if they are not able to keep up their dividend at twelve and a-half. And as they have at the same time tea, and other India goods in their warehouses, to the amount of four millions, as some say, for which they want a market, and which, if it had been sold, would have kept up their credit, I take the opportunity of remarking in all companies the great imprudence of losing the American market, by keeping up the duty on tea, which has thrown that trade into the hands of the Dutch, Danes, Swedes, and French, who, according to the reports and letters of some custom-house officers in America, now supply by smuggling the whole continent, not with tea only, but accompany that article with other India goods, amounting as supposed in the whole to five hundred thousand pounds sterling per annum. This gives some alarm, and begins to convince people more and more of the impropriety of quarrelling with America, who at that rate might have taken off two millions and a half of those goods within these five years that the combination has subsisted, if the duty had not been laid, or had been speedily repealed.

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But our great security lies, I think, in our growing strength both in numbers and wealth, that creates an increasing ability of assisting this nation in its wars, which will make us more respectable, our friendship more valued, and our enmity feared, thence it will soon be thought proper to treat us not with justice only, but with kindness, and thence we may expect in a few years a total change of measures with regard to us; unless by a neglect of military discipline we should lose all martial spirit, and our western people become as tame as those in the eastern dominions of Britain, when we may expect the same oppressions, for there is much truth in the Italian saying, *Make yourselves sheep and the wolves will eat you.* In confidence of this coming change in our favor, I think our prudence is meanwhile to be quiet, only holding up our rights and claims on all occasions in resolutions, memorials, and remonstrances; but bearing patiently the little present notice that is taken of them. They will all have their weight in time, and that time is at no great distance.

With the greatest esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

London, February 14, 1773.

DEAR SON,

THE opposition are now attacking the ministry on the St. Vincent's affair, which is generally condemned here, and some think lord Hillsborough will be given up, as the adviser of that expedition. But if it succeeds, perhaps all will blow over. The ministry are more embarrassed with the India affairs; the continued refusal of North America to take tea from hence, has brought infinite distress on the company: they imported great quantities in faith that that agreement could not hold; and now they can neither pay their debts nor dividends, their stock has sunk to the annihilating near three millions of their property, and government will lose its four

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hundred thousand pounds a-year; while their teas lie on hand: the bankruptcies brought on partly by this means have given such a shock to credit as has not been experienced here since the South Sea year. And this has affected the great manufacturers so much, as to oblige them to discharge their hands, and thousands of Spitalfields and Manchester weavers are now starving, or subsisting on charity. Blessed effects of pride, pique, and passion in government, which should have no passions. Yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable Thomas Cushing, Esq.

London, March 9, 1773.

SIR,

I DID myself the honor of writing to you the 2d of December and the 5th January past. Since which I have received your favor of November 28, inclosing the votes and proceedings of the town of Boston, which I have reprinted here, with a preface. Herewith I send you a few copies.

Governor Hutchinson's speech at the opening of your January session, has been printed and industriously circulated here by (as I think) the ministerial people, which I take to be no good sign. The assembly's answer to it is not yet arrived, and in the mean while it seems to make impression on the minds of many not well acquainted with the dispute. The tea duty however is under the consideration of parliament, for a repeal on a petition from the East India company, and, no new measures have been talked of against America, is likely to be taken during the present session; I was therefore preparing to return home by the spring ships, but have been advised by our friends to stay till the session is over; as the commission sent to Rhode Island, and discontents in your province, with the correspondence of the towns, may possibly give rise to something here, when my being on the spot may be of use to our country. I conclude to stay a little longer. In the mean time I must hope that great care will be taken to keep our people quiet, since nothing is more wished for

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by our enemies than that by insurrections we should give a good pretence for increasing the military among us, and putting us under more severe restraints. And it must be is evident that by our rapidly increasing strength we shall soon become of so much importance, that none of our just claims of privilege will be as heretofore nattended to, nor any security we can wish for our rights be denied us.

With great respect I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same. (*Private.*)

London, April 3, 1773.

SIR,

MY last was of the 9th past, since which nothing material has occurred relating to the colonies. The assembly's answer to governor Hutchinson's speech is not yet come over, but I find that even his friends here are apprehensive of some ill consequences, from his forcing the assembly into that dispute; and begin to say it was not prudently done, though they believe it meant well. I inclose you two newspapers in which it is mentioned. Lord Dartmouth the other day expressed his wish to me, that some means could be fallen upon to heal the breach. I took the freedom to tell him, that he could do much in it if he would exert himself; I think I see signs of relenting in some others. The bishop of St. Asaph's sermon before the society for propagating the gospel is much talked of, for its catholic spirit and favorable sentiments relating to the colonies. I will endeavor to get a copy to send you.

With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Governor Franklin.

London, April 6, 1773.

DEAR SON,

I RECEIVED yours of February 2, with the papers of information that accompany it.

I have sent to Mr. Galloway one of the bishop of St. Asaph's sermons, for your society for propagating the gospel. I would have sent you one, but you will receive it of course as a member. It contains such liberal and generous sentiments relating to the conduct of government here towards America, that sir J. P. says it was written in compliment to me. But from the intimacy of friendship in which I live with the author, I know he has expressed nothing but what he thinks and feels; and I honor him the more, that through the mere hope of doing good he has hazarded the displeasure of the court, and of course the prospect of further preferment. Possibly indeed the ideas of the court may change; for I think I see some alarms at the discontents in New England, and some appearance of softening in the disposition of government, on the idea that matters have been carried too far there. But all depends upon circumstances and events. We govern from hand to mouth. There seems to be no wise regular plan.

I saw lord Dartmouth about two weeks since. He mentioned nothing to me of your application for additional salary, nor did I to him, for I do not like it. I fear it will embroil you with your people.

While I am writing comes to hand yours of March 2. My letter by the October packet must have been sent as usual to the office by the bell-man. That being, as you inform me, rubbed open as some of yours to me have been, gives an additional circumstance of probability to the conjecture made in mine of December 2. For the future I shall send letters of consequence to the office (when I use the packet conveyance) by my clerk.

Your accounts of the numbers of people, births, burials, &c. in your province, will be very agreeable to me, and par-

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ticularly so to Dr. Price. Compared with former accounts, they will show the increase of your people, but not perfectly, as I think a great many have gone from New Jersey to the more southern colonies.

The parliament is like to sit till the end of June, as Mr. Cooper tells me. I had thoughts of returning home about that time. The Boston assembly's answer to the governor's speech, which I have just received, may possibly produce something here to occasion my longer stay.

I am, your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable Thomas Cushing, Esq. (Private.)

London, May 6, 1773.

SIR,

I HAVE received none of your favors since that of November 28. I have since written to you of the following dates, December 2, January 5, March 9, and April 3, which I hope got safe to hand.

The council and assembly's answer to governor Hutchinson's speech I caused to be printed here as soon as I received them. His reply I see since printed also, but their rejoinder is not yet come. If he intended by reviving that dispute to recommend himself, he has greatly missed his aim; for the administration are chagrined with his officiousness, their intention having been to let all contention subside, and by degrees suffer matters to return to the old channel. They are now embarrassed by his proceedings; for if they lay the governor's despatches, containing the declaration of the general court, before parliament, they apprehend measures may be taken that will widen the breach; which would be more particularly inconvenient at this time, when the disturbed state of Europe gives some apprehensions of a general war; on the other hand, if they do not lay them before parliament they give advantage to opposition against themselves on some future occasion, in a charge of criminal neglect. Some say he

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must be a fool, others that through some misinformation he really supposed lord Hillsborough to be again in office.

Yesterday I had a conversation with lord D. of which I think it right to give you some account. On my saying that I had no late advices from Boston, and asking if his lordship had any, he said, none since the governor's second speech; but what difficulties that gentleman has brought us all into by his imprudence! though I suppose he meant well:—yet what can now be done? It is impossible that parliament can suffer such a declaration of the general assembly, asserting its independency, to pass unnoticed. In my opinion, said I, it would be better and more prudent to take no notice of it. It is *words* only. Acts of parliament are still submitted to there. No force is used to obstruct their execution. And while that is the case parliament would do well to turn a deaf ear, and seem not to know that such declarations had ever been made. Violent measures against the province will not change the opinion of the people. Force could do no good. I do not know, said he, that force would be thought of; but perhaps an act may pass to lay them under some inconveniencies till they rescind that declaration. Can they not withdraw it? I wish they could be persuaded to reconsider the matter, and do it of themselves voluntarily, and thus leave things between us on the old footing, the points undiscussed. Don't you think (continued his lordship) such a thing possible? No, my lord, said I, I think it is impossible. If they were even to wish matters back in the situation before the governor's speech, and the dispute obliterated, they cannot withdraw their answers till he first withdraws his speech, which methinks would be an awkward operation, that perhaps he will hardly be directed to perform. As to an act of parliament, laying that country under inconveniencies, it is likely that it will only put them as heretofore on some method of incommoding this country till the act is repealed; and so we shall go on injuring and provoking each other, instead of cultivating that good will and harmony, so necessary to the general welfare. He said, that might be, and

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he was sensible our divisions must weaken the whole; for we are yet *one empire*, said he, whatever may be the sentiments of the Massachusetts assembly, but he did not see how that could be avoided. He wondered, as the dispute was now of public notoriety, parliament had not already called for the despatches; and he thought he could not omit much longer the communicating them, however unwilling he was to do it, from his apprehension of the consequences. But what (his lordship was pleased to say) if you were in my place, would or could you do? Would you hazard the being called to account in some future session of parliament, for keeping back the communication of despatches of such importance? I said, his lordship could best judge, what in his situation was fittest for him to do; I could only give my poor opinion with regard to parliament, that supposing the despatches laid before them, they would act most prudently in ordering them to lie on the table, and take no farther notice of them. For were I as much an Englishman as I am an American, and ever so desirous of establishing the authority of parliament, I protest to your lordship, I cannot conceive of a single step the parliament can take to increase it, that will not tend to diminish it; and after abundance of mischief they must finally lose it. The loss in itself perhaps would not be of much consequence because it is an authority they can never well exercise for want of due information and knowledge, and therefore it is not worth hazarding the mischief to preserve it. Then adding my wishes that I could be of any service in healing our differences, his lordship said, I do not see any thing of more service than prevailing on the general assembly, if you can do it, to withdraw their answers to the governor's speech. There is not, says I, the least probability they will ever do that; for the country is all of one mind upon the subject. Perhaps the governor may have represented to your lordship, that these are the opinions of a party only, and that great numbers are of different sentiments which may in time prevail. But if he does not deceive himself he deceives your

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lordship: for in both houses, notwithstanding the influence appertaining to his office, there was not, in sending up those answers, a single dissenting voice. I do not recollect, says his lordship, that the governor has written any thing of that kind. I am told, however, by gentlemen from that country, who pretend to know it, that there are many of the governor's opinion, but they dare not show their sentiments. I never heard, said I, that any one has suffered violence for siding with the governor. Not violence perhaps, said his lordship, but they are reviled and held in contempt, and people do not care to incur the disesteem and displeasure of their neighbors. As I knew governor Bernard had been in with his lordship just before me, I thought he was probably one of these gentlemen informants, and therefore said, people who are engaged in any party or have advised any measures are apt to magnify the numbers of those they would have understood as approving their measures. His lordship said that was natural to suppose might be the present case; for whoever observed the conduct of parties here, must have seen it a constant practice: and he agreed with me, that though a *nemine contradicente* did not prove the absolute agreement of every man in the opinion voted, it at least demonstrated the great prevalence of that opinion.

Thus ended our conference. I shall watch this business till the parliament rises, and endeavor to make people in general as sensible of the inconveniences to this country that may attend a continuance of the contest, as the Spitalfields weavers seem already to be in their petition to the king, which I herewith send you. I have already the pleasure to find that my friend, the bishop of St. Asaph's sermon, is universally approved and applauded, which I take to be no bad symptom.

With sincere esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the same.

London, June 2, 1773.

SIR,

SINCE my last of the 6th past, I have been honored with yours of March 6 and 24, inclosing a petition to the king, and a letter to lord Dartmouth. On considering the whole, I concluded that a longer delay of presenting the first petition and remonstrance was not likely to answer any good purpose, and therefore immediately waited on lord Dartmouth, and delivered to him the letter, and the second petition, at the same time re-delivering the first, and pressed his lordship to present them to his majesty, which he promised to do. Inclosed I send you the answer I have just received from him, as this day's packet (the mail for which is to be made up and despatched in a few hours) is the earliest opportunity, the ships for Boston not being to sail till the beginning of next week. By one of them I shall send a copy, with what observations occur to me on the occasion, which the time will not now permit me to write. In the mean while I would just beg leave to say, that I hope the house will come to no hasty resolves upon it. The longer they deliberate, the more maturely they consider, the greater weight will attend their resolutions.

With sincere respect, I am, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

London, June 4, 1773.

SIR,

THE above is a copy of mine, per packet, which inclosed the original of his majesty's answer to our petitions and remonstrance. I now send an exact copy of the same, which I did intend to accompany with some observations, and my sentiments on the general state of our affairs in this country, and the conduct proper for us to hold on this occasion. But

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beginning to write, I find the matter too copious, and the subject (on reflection) too important to be treated of in an hasty letter; and being told the ships sail to-morrow, I must postpone it to another opportunity.

It was thought at the beginning of the session, that the American duty on tea would be taken off. But now the wise scheme is to take off so much duty here, as will make tea cheaper in America than foreigners can supply us, and to confine the duty there to keep up the exercise of the right. They have no idea that any people can act from any other principle but that of interest; and they believe that three pence in a pound of tea, of which one does not perhaps drink ten pounds in a year, is sufficient to overcome all the patriotism of an American.

I purpose soon to write to you very fully. As to the letters I communicated to you, though I have not been able to obtain leave to take copies or publish them, I have permission to let the originals remain with you as long as you may think it of any use to have them in possession.

With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

London, July 7, 1773.

SIR,

I THANK you for the pamphlets you have sent me, containing the controversy between the governor and the two houses. I have distributed them where I thought they might be of use. He makes perhaps as much of his argument as it will bear; but has the misfortune of being on the weak side, and so is put to shifts and quibbles, and the use of much sophistry and artifice, to give plausibility to his reasonings. The council and the assembly have greatly the advantage in point of fairness, perspicuity, and force. His precedents of acts of parliament binding the colonies, and our tacit consent

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to those acts are all frivolous. Shall a guardian who has imposed upon, cheated, and plundered a minor under his care, who was unable to prevent it, plead those impositions after his ward has discovered them, as precedents and authorities for continuing them. There have been precedents time out of mind for robbing on Hounslow heath, but the highwayman who robbed there yesterday, does nevertheless deserve hanging.

I am glad to see the resolves of the Virginia house of burgesses. There are brave spirits among that people. I hope their proposal will be readily complied with by all the colonies. It is natural to suppose as you do, that if the oppressions continue, a congress may grow out of that correspondence. Nothing would more alarm our ministers; but if the colonies agree to hold a congress, I do not see how it can be prevented.

The instruction relating to the exemption of the commissioners I imagine is withdrawn; perhaps the other also relating to the agents, but of that I have heard nothing. I only wonder that the governor should make such a declaration of his readiness to comply with an intimation in acting contrary to any instructions, if he had not already, or did not soon expect a repeal of those instructions. I have not and shall never use your name on this or any similar occasion.

I note your directions relating to public and private letters, and shall not fail to observe them. At the same time I think all the correspondence should be in the speaker's power, to communicate such extracts only as he should think proper for the house. It is extremely embarrassing to an agent, to write letters concerning his transactions with ministers, which letters he knows are to be read in the house where there may be governor's spies, who carry away parts, or perhaps take copies that are echoed back hither privately; if they should not be, as sometimes they are, printed in the votes. It is impossible to write freely in such circumstances, unless he would hazard his usefulness, and put it out of his power

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to do his country any farther service. I speak this now, not upon my own account, being about to decline all public business, but for your consideration with regard to future agents.

And now we speak of agents, I must mention my concern that I should fall under so severe a censure of the house, as that of neglect in their business. I have submitted to the reproof without reply in my public letter, out of pure respect. It is not decent to dispute a father's admonitions. But to you in private, permit me to observe, that as to the two things I am blamed for not giving the earliest notice of, viz. the clause in the act relating to dock yards, and the appointment of salaries for the governor and judges; the first only seems to have some foundation. I did not know, but perhaps I ought to have known, that such a clause was intended. And yet in a parliament, that during the whole session refused admission to strangers, wherein near two hundred acts were passed, it is not so easy a matter to come at the knowledge of every clause in every act, and to give opposition to what may affect one's constituents; especially when it is not uncommon to smuggle clauses into a bill whose title shall give no suspicion, when an opposition to such clauses is apprehended. I say this is no easy matter. But had I known of this clause, it is not likely I could have prevented its passing in the present disposition of government towards America, nor do I see that my giving earlier notice of its having passed could have been of much service. As to the other, concerning the governor and judges, I should hardly have thought of sending the house an account of it, if the minister had mentioned it to me, as I understood from their first letter to me, that they had already the best intelligence "of its being determined by administration to bestow large salaries on the attorney-general, judges, and governor of the province." I could not therefore possibly "give the *first notice* of this impending evil." I answered however "that there was no doubt of the intention of making governors, and some other officers, independent of the people for their support, and that this purpose will be persisted in, if the American revenue is found suffi-

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cient to defray the salaries." This censure, though grievous, does not so much surprise me, as I apprehended all along from the beginning, that between the friends of an old agent, my predecessor, who thought himself hardly used in his dismission, and those of a young one impatient for the succession, my situation was not likely to be a very comfortable one, as my faults could scarce pass unobserved.

I think of leaving England in September. As soon as possible after my arrival in America, I purpose (God willing) to visit Boston, when I hope to have the pleasure of paying my respects to you. I shall then give every information in my power, and offer every advice relating to our affairs, (not so convenient to be written) that my situation here for so many years may enable me to suggest for the benefit of our country. Some time before my departure, I shall put your papers into the hands of Mr. Lee, and assist him with with my counsel while I stay, where there may be any occassion for it. He is a gentleman of parts and ability, and though he cannot exceed me in sincere zeal for the interest and prosperity of the province, his youth will easily enable him to serve it with more activity.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obliged and most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

London, July 7, 1773.

SIR,

THE parliament is at length prorogued, without meddling with the state of America. Their time was much employed in the East India business: and perhaps it was not thought prudent to lay before them the advices from New England, though some threatening intimations had been given of such an intention. The king's firm answer (as it is called) to our petitions, and remonstrances, has probably been judged sufficient for the present. I forwarded that answer to you by the last packet, and sent a copy of it by a Boston ship the be-

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ginning of last month. Therein we are told "that his majesty has well weighed the *subject matter*, and the expressions contained in those petitions; and that as he will ever attend to the *humble* petitions of his subjects, and be forward to redress every *real* grievance, so he is determined to support *the constitution*, and resist with firmness every attempt to derogate from the authority of the *supreme legislature*."

By this it seems that some exception is taken to the *expressions* of the petitions, as not sufficiently humble, that the grievances complained of are not thought *real* grievances, that parliament is deemed the supreme legislature, and its authority over the colonies supposed to be the *constitution*. Indeed the last idea is expressed more fully in the next paragraph, where the words of the act are used, declaring the right of the crown, with the advice of parliament, to make laws of *sufficient force and validity* to bind its subjects in America *in all cases whatsoever*.

When one considers the king's situation, surrounded by ministers, counsellors, and judges, learned in the law, who are all of this opinion, and reflect how necessary it is for him to be well with his parliament, from whose yearly grants his fleets and armies are to be supported, and the deficiencies of his civil list supplied, it is not to be wondered at, that he should be firm in an opinion established, as far as an act of parliament could establish it, by even the friends of America at the time they repealed the stamp act; and which is so generally thought right, by his lords and commons, that any act of his, countenancing the contrary, would hazard his embroiling himself with those powerful bodies. And from hence it seems hardly to be expected from him, that he should take any step of that kind. The grievous instructions indeed might be withdrawn without their observing it, if his majesty thought fit so to do; but under the present prejudices of all about him, it seems that this is not yet likely to be advised.

The question then arises, how are we to obtain redress? If we look back into the parliamentary history of this country, we shall find, that in similar situations of the subjects

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here, redress would seldom be obtained but by withholding aids when the sovereign was in distress, till the grievances were removed. Hence the rooted custom of the commons to keep money bills in their own disposition, not suffering even the lords to meddle in grants, either as to quantity, manner of raising, or even in the smallest circumstance. This country pretends to be collectively our sovereign. It is now deeply in debt. Its funds are far short of recovering their par since the last war: another would distress it still more. Its people diminish, as well as its credit. Men will be wanted as well as money. The colonies are rapidly increasing in wealth and numbers. In the last war they maintained an army of twenty-five thousand. A country able to do that, is no contemptible ally. In another war they may perhaps do twice as much with equal ease. Whenever a war happens our aid will be wished for, our friendship desired and cultivated, our good will courted: then is the time to say, *redress our grievances.* You take money from us by force, and now you ask it of voluntary grant. You cannot have it both ways. If you choose to have it without our consent, you must go on taking it that way, and be content with what little you can so obtain. If you would have our free gifts, desist from your compulsive methods, and acknowledge our rights, and secure our future enjoyment of them. Our claims will then be attended to, and our complaints regarded. By what I perceived not long since, when a war was apprehended with Spain, the different countenance put on by some great men here, towards those who were thought to have a little influence in America, and the language, that began to be held with regard to the then minister for the colonies, I am confident that if that war had taken place he would have been immediately dismissed, all his measures reversed, and every step taken to recover our affection and procure our assistance. Thence I think it fair to conclude that similar effects will probably be produced by similar circumstances.

But as the strength of an empire depends not only on the *union* of its parts, but on their *readiness* for united exertion

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of their common force; and as the discussion of rights may seem unseasonable in the commencement of actual war, and the delay it might occasion be prejudicial to the common welfare: as likewise the refusal of one or a few colonies, would not be so much regarded if the others granted liberally, which perhaps by various artifices and motives they might be prevailed on to do; and as this want of concert would defeat the expectation of general redress that otherwise might be justly formed; perhaps it would be best and fairest, for the colonies in a general congress now in peace to be assembled, or by means of the correspondence lately proposed, after a full and solemn assertion and declaration of their rights, to engage firmly with each other, that they will never grant aids to the crown in any general war, till those rights are recognized by the king and both houses of parliament; communicating at the same time to the crown this their resolution. Such a step I imagine will bring the dispute to a crisis: and whether our demands are immediately complied with, or compulsory measures thought of to make us rescind them, our ends will finally be obtained, for even the odium accompanying such compulsory attempts will contribute to unite and strengthen us, and in the mean time all the world will allow that our proceeding has been honorable.

No one doubts the advantage of a strict union between the mother-country and the colonies, if it may be obtained and preserved on equitable terms. In every fair connection each party should find its own interest. Britain will find hers in our joining with her in every war she makes, to the greater annoyance and terror of her enemies; in our employment of her manufactures, and enriching her merchants by our commerce; and her government will feel some additional strengthening of its hands, by the disposition of our profitable posts and places. On our side, we have to expect the protection she can afford us, and the advantage of a common umpire in our disputes, thereby preventing wars we might otherwise have with each other, so that we can without interruption go on with our improvements, and increase our num-

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bers. We ask no more of her, and she should not think of forcing more from us. By the exercise of prudent moderation on her part, mixed with a little kindness; and by a decent behavior on ours, excusing where we can excuse from a consideration of circumstances, and bearing a little with the infirmities of her government, as we would with those of an aged parent, though firmly asserting our privileges, and declaring that we mean at a proper time to vindicate them, this advantageous union may still be long continued. We wish it, and we may endeavor it, but God will order it as to his wisdom shall seem most suitable. The friends of liberty here wish we may long preserve it on our side the water, that they may find it there, if adverse events should destroy it here. They are therefore anxious and afraid lest we should hazard it by premature attempts in its favor. They think we may risque much by violent measures, and that the risque is unnecessary, since a little time must infallibly bring us all we demand or desire, and bring it us in peace and safety. I do not presume to advise. There are many wiser men among you, and I hope you will be directed by a still superior wisdom.

With regard to the sentiments of people in general here, concerning America, I must say, that we have among them many friends, and well-wishers. The dissenters are all for us, and many of the merchants and manufacturers. There seems to be, even among the country gentlemen, a general sense of our growing importance, a disapprobation of the harsh measures with which we have been treated, and a wish that some means may be found of perfect reconciliation. A few members of parliament in both houses, and perhaps some in high office, have in a degree the same ideas, but none of these seem willing as yet to be active in our favor, lest adversaries should take advantage and charge it upon them as a betraying the interests of this nation. In this state of things no endeavor of mine or our other friends here "to obtain a repeal of the acts so oppressive to the colonists, or the orders of the crown so destructive of the charter rights of our province in parti-

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cular, can expect a sudden success." By degrees, and a judicious improvement of events, we may work a change in minds and measures, but otherwise such great alterations are hardly to be looked for.

I am thankful to the house for their kind attention, in repeating their grant to me of six hundred pounds. Whether the instruction restraining the governor's assent is withdrawn or not, or is likely to be, I cannot tell, having never solicited or even once mentioned it to lord Dartmouth, being resolved to owe no obligation to the favor of any minister. If from a sense of right, that instruction should be recalled, and the general principle on which it was founded is given up, all will be very well: but you can never think it worth while to employ an agent here, if his being paid or not is to depend on the breath of a minister, and I should think it a situation too suspicious, and therefore too dishonorable for me to remain in, a single hour. Living frugally, I am under no immediate necessity, and if I serve my constituents faithfully, though it should be unsuccessfully, I am confident they will always have it in their inclination, and some time or other in their power, to make their grants effectual.

A gentleman of our province, captain Calef, is come hither as an agent for some of the eastern townships, to obtain a confirmation of their lands. Sir Francis Bernard seems inclined to make use of this person's application for promoting a separation of that country from your province, and making it a distinct government; to which purpose he prepared a draft of a memorial for Calef to present, setting forth not only the hardship of being without security in the property of their improvements, but also of the distress of the people there for want of government; that they were at too great a distance from these at of government in the Massachusetts, to be capable of receiving the benefits of government from thence, and expressing their willingness to be separated and formed into a new province, &c. With this draft sir Francis and Mr. Calef came to me to have my opinion. I read it, and observed to them, that though I wished the people quieted in

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their possessions, and would do any thing I could to assist in obtaining the assurance of their property, yet as I knew the province of Massachusetts had a right to that country, of which they were justly tenacious, I must oppose that part of the memorial, if it should be presented. Sir Francis allowed the right, but proposed that a great tract of land between Merrimack and Connecticut rivers, which had been allotted to New Hampshire, might be restored to our province, by order of the crown, as a compensation. This he said would be of more value to us than that eastern country, as being nearer home, &c. I said I would mention it in my letters, but must in the mean time oppose any step taken in the affair before the sentiments of the general court should be known, as to such an exchange, if it were offered. Mr. Calef himself did not seem fond of the draft, and I have not seen him, or heard any thing farther of it since, but I shall watch it.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the house, and believe me with sincere and great esteem, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Mather, Boston.

London, July 7, 1773.

REVEREND SIR,

THE remarks you have added, on the late proceedings against America, are very just and judicious: and I cannot see any impropriety in your making them, though a minister of the gospel. This kingdom is a good deal indebted for its liberties to the public spirit of its ancient clergy, who joined with the barons in obtaiuing Magna Charta, and joined heartily in forming the curses of excommunication against the infringers of it. There is no doubt but the claim of parliament, of authority to make laws *binding on the colonies in all cases whatsoever*, includes an authority to change our religious constitution, and establish popery or Mahomedanism, if they please, in its stead; but, as you intimate, *power* does

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not infer *right;* and as the *right* is nothing, and the *power* (by our increase) continually diminishing, the one will soon be as insignificant as the *other.* You seem only to have made a small mistake, in supposing they modestly avoided to declare they had a right, the words of the act being, "that they have and of *right* ought to have full power, &c."

Your suspicion that sundry others besides governor Bernard "had written hither their opinions and counsels encouraging the late measures to the prejudice of our country, which have been too much heeded and followed," is, I apprehend, but too well founded. You call them "traitorous individuals," whence I collect, that you suppose them of our own country. There was among the twelve Apostles one traitor, who betrayed with a kiss. It should be no wonder therefore, if among so many thousand true patriots, as New England contains, there should be found even twelve Judases, ready to betray their country for a few paltry pieces of silver. Their *ends* as well as their view sought to be similar. But all the oppressions evidently work for our good. Providence seems by every means intent on making us a great people. May our virtues public and private grow with us, and be durable, that liberty, civil and religious, may be secured to our posterity, and to all from every part of the old world that take refuge among us.

With great esteem, and my best wishes for a long continuance of your usefulness, I am, reverend sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Cooper, Boston.

London, July 7, 1773.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your very valuable favors of March 15 and April 23. It rejoices me to find your health so far restored that your friends can again be benefited by your correspondence.

The governor was certainly out in his politics, if he hoped to recommend himself there, by entering upon that dispute

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with the assembly. His imprudence in bringing it at all upon the tapis, and his bad management of it, are almost equally censured. The council and assembly on the other hand have, by the coolness, clearness, and force of their answers, gained great reputation.

The unanimity of our towns, in their sentiments of liberty, gives me great pleasure, as it shows the generally enlightened state of our people's minds, and the falsehood of the opinion, much cultivated here by the partizans of arbitrary power in America, that only a small faction among us were discontented with the late measures. If that unanimity can be discovered in all the colonies, it will give much greater weight to our future remonstrances. I heartily wish with you, that some line could be drawn, some bill of rights established for America, that might secure peace between the two countries, so necessary for the prosperity of both. But I think little attention is like to be afforded by our ministers to that salutary work, till the breach becomes greater and more alarming, and then the difficulty of repairing it will be greater in a tenfold proportion.

You mention the surprise of gentlemen to whom those letters have been communicated, at the restrictions with which they were accompanied, and which they suppose render them incapable of answering any important end. One great reason of forbidding their publication, was an apprehension that it might put all the possessors of such correspondence here upon their guard, and so prevent the obtaining more of it. And it was imagined that showing the originals to so many as were named, and to a few such others as they might think fit, would be sufficient to establish the authenticity, and to spread through the province so just an estimation of the writers, as to strip them of all their deluded friends, and demolish effectually their interest and influence. The letters might be shewn even to some of the governor's and lieutenant governor's partizans and spoken of to every body; for there was no restraint proposed to talking of them, but only to co-

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pying. However the terms given with them could only be those with which they were received.

The great defect here is in all sorts of people a want of attention to what passes in such remote countries as America, an unwillingness to read any thing about them if it appears a little lengthy; and a disposition to postpone the consideration even of the things they know they must at last consider, that so they may have time for what more immediately concerns them, and withal enjoy their amusements, and be undisturbed in the universal dissipation. In other respects, though some of the great regard us with a jealous eye, and some are angry with us, the majority of the nation rather wish us well, and have no desire to infringe our liberties. And many console themselves under the apprehension of declining liberty here, that they or their posterity shall be able to find her safe and vigorous in America.

With sincere and great esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

London, July 14, 1773.

DEAR SON,

I AM glad to find by yours of May 4, that you have been able to assist Josiah Davenport a little; but vexed that he and you should think of putting me upon a solicitation which it is impossible for me to engage in. I am not upon terms with lord North to ask any such favor from him. Displeased with something he said relating to America, I have never been at his levees, since the first. Perhaps he has taken that amiss. For last week we met occasionally at lord Le Despencer's in our return from Oxford, where I had been to attend the solemnity of his installation, and he seemed studiously to avoid speaking to me. I ought to be ashamed to say, that on such occasions I feel myself to be as proud as any body. His lady indeed was more gracious. She came, and sat down by me on the same sopha, and condescended to enter into a conversation with me agreeably enough, as if to make some amends.

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Their son and daughter were with them. They staid all night, so that we dined, supped, and breakfasted together, without exchanging three sentences. But had he ever so great a regard for me, I could not ask that office, trifling as it is, for any relation of mine. And detesting as I do the whole system of American customs, believing they will one day bring on a breach, through the indiscretion and insolence of those concerned in the collection, I should never wish to see one so near to me in that business. If you think him capable of acting as deputy secretary, I imagine you might easily obtain that for him of Mr. Morgan. He has lately been with me, is always very complaisant, and understanding I was about returning to America, requested my interest to obtain for him the *agency for your province*. His friend sir Watkin Lewes, who was formerly candidate for the same *great place*, is now high sheriff of London, and in the way of being lord mayor. The new sheriffs elect, are (could you think it?) both Americans, viz. Mr. Sayre, the New Yorker, and Mr. W. Lee, brother to Dr. Lee. I am glad you stand so well with lord Dartmouth. I am likewise well with him, but he never spoke to me of augmenting your salary. He is truly a good man, and wishes sincerely a good understanding with the colonies, but does not seem to have strength equal to his wishes. Between you and me, the late measures have been, I suspect, very much the king's own, and he has in some cases a great share of what his friends call *firmness*. Yet by some pains-taking and proper management, the wrong impressions he has received may be removed, which is perhaps the only chance America has for obtaining *soon* the redress she aims at. This entirely to yourself.

And now we are among great folks, let me tell you a little of lord Hillsborough. I went down to Oxford with and at the instance of lord Le Despencer, who is on all occasions very good to me, and seems of late very desirous of my company. Mr. Todd too was there, who has some attachment to lord H. and in a walk we were taking, told me as a secret that lord H. was much chagrined at being out of place, and

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could never forgive me for writing that pamphlet against his report about the Ohio. I assured him, says Mr. T., that I knew you did not write it; and the consequence is, that he thinks I know the contrary, and wanted to impose upon him in your favor; and so I find he is now displeased with me, and for no other cause in the world. His friend Bamber Gascoign too, says that they *well know* it was written by Dr. F., who was one of the most mischievous men in England. That same day lord H. called upon lord Le D., whose chamber and mine were together in Queen's college. I was in the inner room shifting, and heard his voice, but did not see him, as he went down stairs immediately with lord Le D., who mentioning that I was above, he returned directly, and came to me in the pleasantest manner imaginable. "Dr. F." said he, "I did not know till this minute that you were here, and I am come back *to make you my bow*. I am glad to see you at Oxford, and that you look so well, &c." In return for this extravagance I complimented him on his son's performance in the theatre, though indeed it was but indifferent, so that account was settled. For as people say, when they are angry, if he *strike me*, I 'll strike him again; I think sometimes it may be right to say, *if he flatters me, I 'll flatter him again*. This is *lex talionis*, returning offences in kind. His son, however, (lord Fairford) is a valuable young man, and his daughters, ladies Mary and Charlotte, most amiable young women. My quarrel is only with him, who of all the men I ever met with is surely the most unequal in his treatment of people, the most insincere, and the most wrongheaded; witness besides his various behaviour to me, his duplicity in encouraging us to ask for more land, *ask for enough to make a province*, (when we at first asked only for two millions five hundred thousand acres,) were his words, pretending to befriend our application, then doing every thing to defeat it, and reconciling the first to the last, by saying to a friend, that he meant to defeat it from the beginning; and that his putting us upon asking so much was with that very view, supposing it too much to be granted. Thus by the way, his mortification becomes double.

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He has served us by the very means he meant to destroy us, and tript up his own heels into the bargain.

Your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Winthrop, Boston.

London, July 25, 1773.

DEAR SIR,

I AM glad to see that you are elected into the council, and are about to take part in our public affairs. Your abilities, integrity, and sober attachment to the liberties of our country, will be of great use in this tempestuous time, in conducting our little bark into safe harbour. By the Boston newspapers, there seems to be among us some violent spirits, who are for an immediate rupture. But I trust the general prudence of our country will see, that by our growing strength we advance fast to a situation in which our claims must be allowed; that by a premature struggle we may be crippled, and kept down another age; that as between friends every affront is not worth a duel, between nations every injury not worth a war, so between the governed and governing every mistake in government, every incroachment on right is not worth a rebellion. 'Tis in my opinion sufficient for the present that we hold them forth on all occasions, not giving up any of them, using at the same time every means to make them generally understood and valued by the people; cultivating a harmony among the colonies, that their union in the same sentiments may give them greater weight: remembering withal, that this Protestant country, (our mother, though lately an unkind one) is worth preserving, and that her weight in the scale of Europe, and her safety in a great degree may depend on our union with her. Thus conducting, I am confident we may in a few years, obtain every allowance of and every security for our inestimable privileges, that we can wish or desire.

With great and sincere esteem, I am,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the Honorable Thomas Cushing, Esq.

London, July 25, 1773.

SIR,

I AM favored with yours of June 14 and 16, containing some copies of the resolves of the committee upon the letters. I see by your account of the transaction, that you could not well prevent what was done. As to the report of other copies being come from England, I know that could not be. It was an expedient to disengage the house. I hope the possession of the originals, and the proceedings upon them will be attended with salutary effects to the province, and then I shall be well pleased.

I observe that you mention, that no person besides Dr. Cooper and one of the committee knew they came from me. I did not accompany them with any request of being myself concealed, for believing what I did to be in the way of my duty as agent, though I had no doubt of its giving offence, not only to the parties exposed, but to administration here, I was regardless of the consequences. However, since the letters themselves are now copied and printed, contrary to the promise I made, I am glad my name has not been heard on the occasion, and as I do not see it could be of any use to the public, I now wish it may continue unknown; though I hardly expect it. As to yours, you may rely on my never mentioning it, except that I may be obliged to show your letter in my own vindication to the person only who might otherwise think he had reason to blame *me* for breach of engagement. It must surely be seen here, that after such a detection of their duplicity, in pretending a regard and affection to the province, while they were undermining its privileges, it is impossible for the crown to make any good use of their services, and that it can never be for its interest to employ servants who are under such universal odium. The consequence one would think should be their removal. But perhaps it may be to titles, or to pensions—if your revenue can pay them.

I am with great esteem, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Dr. Cooper, Boston.

London, July 25, 1773.

DEAR SIR,

I WROTE to you on the 7th instant pretty fully, and am since favored with yours of June 14.

I am much pleased with the proposal of the Virginia assembly, and the respectful manner in which it has been received by ours. I think it likely to produce very salutary effects.

I am glad to know your opinion, that those letters came seasonably, and may be of public utility. I accompanied them with no restriction relating to myself; my duty to the province as their agent, I thought required the communication of them as far as I could; I was sensible I should make enemies there, and perhaps I might offend government here; but those apprehensions I disregarded. I did not expect, that my sending them could be kept a secret: but since it is such hitherto, I now wish it may continue so, because the publication of the letters contrary to my engagement, has changed the circumstances. If they serve to diminish the influence and demolish the power of the parties whose correspondence has been, and probably would have continued to be, so mischievous to the interests and rights of the province, I shall on that account be more easy under any inconveniences I may suffer, either here or there; and shall bear as well as I can, the imputation of not having taken sufficient care to insure the performance of my promise.

I think government can hardly expect to draw any future service from such instruments, and one would suppose they must soon be dismissed. We shall see.

I hope to be favored with the continuance of your correspondence and intelligence, while I stay here; it is highly useful to me, and will be as it always has been pleasing every where.

I am ever, dear sir, your obliged and most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the Honorable Thomas Cushing, Esq.

London, August 24, 1773.

SIR,

I RECEIVED duly your several favors of June 25, 26, and 30, with the papers inclosed. My lord Dartmouth being at his country seat in Staffordshire, I transmitted to him the address for the removal of the governor and lieutenant-governor, and Mr. Bollan and I jointly, transmitted the letter to his lordship from both houses. I delivered to Mr. Bollan one set of the authenticated copies of the letters, and we shall co-operate in the business we are charged with.

I am told that the governor has requested leave to come home; that some great persons about the court do not think the letters, now they have seen them, a sufficient foundation for the resolves; that therefore it is not likely he will be removed, but suffered to resign, and that some provision will be made for him here. But nothing I apprehend is likely to be done soon, as most of the great officers of state, who composed the privy council, are in the country, and likely to continue till the parliament meets, and perhaps the above may be chiefly conjecture.

I have informed Mr. Lee, that in case there should be an hearing, I was directed to engage him as counsel for the province; that though I had received no money, I would advance what might be necessary; those hearings by counsel being expensive.

I purpose writing to you again by the packet, and am with the greatest respect, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

No determination is yet public on the case of Mr. Lewis against governor Wentworth, which has been a very costly hearing to both sides.

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To Governor Franklin.

London, Sept. 1, 1773.

DEAR SON,

I HAVE now before me yours of July 5 and 6. The August packet is not yet arrived.

Dr. Cooper of New York's opinion of the author of the sermon, however honorable to me, is injurious to the good bishop; and therefore I must say, in justice and truth, that I knew nothing of his intention to preach on the subject, and saw not a word of the sermon till it was printed. Possibly some preceding conversation between us may have turned his thoughts that way; but if so, that is all.

I think the resolutions of the New England townships must have the effect they seem intended for, viz. to show that the discontents were really general, and their sentiments concerning their rights unanimous, and not the fiction of a few demagogues, as their governors used to represent them here: and therefore not useless, though they should not as yet induce government to acknowledge their claims: that people may probably think it sufficient for the present to assert and hold forth their rights secure: that sooner or later they must be admitted and acknowledged. The declaratory law here, had too its use, viz. to prevent or lessen at least a clamor against the ministry that repealed the stamp act, as if they had given up the right of this country to govern America. Other use indeed it could have none, and I remember lord Mansfield told the lords, when upon that bill, that it was nugatory. To be sure, in a dispute between two parties about rights, the declaration of one party can never be supposed to bind the other.

It is said there is now a project on foot to form an union with Ireland, and that lord Harcourt is to propose it at the next meeting of the Irish parliament. The eastern side of Ireland are averse to it; supposing that when Dublin is no longer the seat of their government it will decline, the har-

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bour being but indifferent, and that the western and southern ports will rise and flourish on its ruins, being good in themselves and much better situated for commerce. For these same reasons, the western and southern people are inclined to the measure, and 'tis thought it may be carried. But these are difficult affairs, and usually take longer time than the projectors imagine. Mr. Crowley, the author of several proposals for uniting the colonies with the mother country, and who runs about much among the ministers, tells me the union of Ireland is only the first step towards a general union. He is for having it done by the parliament of England, without consulting the colonies, and he will warrant, he says, that if the terms proposed are equitable, they will all come in one after the other. He seems rather a little cracked upon the subject.

It is said here, that the famous Boston letters were sent chiefly, if not all, to the late Mr. Wheatly. They fell into my hands, and I thought it my duty to give some principal people there a sight of them, very much with this view, that when they saw the measures they complained of took their rise in a great degree from the representations and recommendations of their own countrymen, their resentment against Britain on account of those measures might abate, as mine had done, and a reconciliation be more easily obtained. In Boston they concealed who sent them, the better to conceal who received and communicated them. And perhaps it is as well that it should continue a secret. Being of that country myself, I think those letters more heinous than you seem to think them; but you had not read them all, nor perhaps the council's remarks on them. I have written to decline their agency on account of my return to America. Dr. Lee succeeds me. I only keep it while I stay, which perhaps will be another winter.

I grieve to hear of the death of my good old friend Dr. Evans. I have lost so many, since I left America, that I begin to fear that I shall find myself a stranger among stran-

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gers, when I return. If so, I must come again to my friends in England.

I am ever your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable Thomas Cushing, Esq.

London, Sept. 12, 1773.

SIR,

THE above is a copy of my last, per packet. Inclosed is the original letter therein mentioned. His lordship continues in the country, but is expected (secretary Pownall tells me) the beginning of next month.

To avoid repealing the American tea duty and yet find a vent for tea, a project is executing to send it from hence, on account of the East India company to be sold in America, agreeable to a late act, impowering the lords of the treasury to grant licences to the company to export tea thither, under certain restrictions, duty free. Some friends of government (as they are called) of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, &c. are to be favored with the commission, who undertake by their interest to carry the measure through in the colonies. How the other merchants thus excluded from the tea trade will like this, I cannot foresee. Their agreement, if I remember right, was not to import tea, till the duty shall be repealed. Perhaps they will think themselves still obliged by that agreement, notwithstanding this temporary expedient; which is only to introduce the tea for the present, and may be dropped next year, and the duty again required, the granting or refusing such licence from time to time remaining in the power of the treasury. And it will seem hard, while their hands are tied, to see the profits of that article all engrossed by a few particulars.

Inclosed[b] I take the liberty of sending you a small piece of mine, written to expose, in as striking a light as I could,

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[b] See the *Prussian Edict*, Vol. V. p. 364 of this edition.

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to the nation, the absurdity of the measures towards America, and to spur the ministry if possible to a change of those measures.

Please to present my duty to the house, and respects to the committee.

I have the honor to be, with much esteem, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

London, October 6, 1773.

DEAR SON,

I WROTE to you on the 1st of last month, since which I have received yours of July 29, from New York.

I know not what letters of mine governor H. could mean, as advising the people to insist on their independency. But whatever they were, I suppose he has sent copies of them hither, having heard some whisperings about them. I shall however, be able at any time, to justify every thing I have written; the purport being uniformly this, that they should carefully avoid all tumults and every violent measure, and content themselves with verbally keeping up their claims, and holding forth their rights whenever occasion requires; secure, that from the growing importance of America, those claims will ere long be attended to, and acknowledged. From a long and thorough consideration of the subject, I am indeed of opinion, that the parliament has no right to make any law whatever, binding on the colonies. That the king, and not the king, lords, and commons collectively, is their sovereign; and that the king with their respective parliaments, is their only legislator. I know your sentiments differ from mine on these subjects. You are a thorough government man, which I do not wonder at, nor do I aim at converting you. I only wish you to act uprightly and steadily, avoiding that duplicity, which in Hutchinson, adds contempt to indignation. If you can promote the prosperity of your people, and leave them

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happier than you found them, whatever your political principles are, your memory will be honored.

I have written two pieces here lately for the Public Advertiser, on American affairs, designed to expose the conduct of this country towards the colonies, in a short, comprehensive, and striking view, and stated therefore in out-of-the-way forms, as most likely to take the general attention. The first was called, *Rules by which a great empire may be reduced to a small one*;* the second, *An Edict of the king of Prussia.* I sent you one of the first, but could not get enough of the second to spare you one, though my clerk went the next morning to the printer's, and wherever they were sold. They were all gone but two. In my own mind I preferred the first, as a composition for the quantity and variety of the matter contained, and a kind of spirited ending of each paragraph. But I find that others here generally prefer the second. I am not suspected as the author, except by one or two friends; and have heard the latter spoken of in the highest terms as the keenest and severest piece that has appeared here a long time. Lord Mansfield I hear said of it, that it *was very* ABLE *and very* ARTFUL indeed; and would do mischief by giving here a bad impression of the measures of government; and in the colonies, by encouraging them in their contumacy. It is reprinted in the Chronicle, where you will see it, but stripped of all the capitalling and italicing, that intimate the allusions and marks the emphasis of written discourses, to bring them as near as possible to those spoken: printing such a piece all in one even small character, seems to me like repeating one of Whitfield's sermons in the monotony of a school-boy. What made it the more noticed here was, that people in reading it, were, as the phrase is, *taken in*, till they had got half through it, and imagined it a real edict, to which mistake I suppose the king of Prussia's *character* must have contributed. I was down at Lord Le Despencer's when the post brought that day's papers.

* See page 369, Vol. V. this edition.

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Mr. Whitehead was there too (Paul Whitehead, the author of Manners) who runs early through all the papers, and tells the company what he finds remarkable. He had them in another room, and we were chatting in the breakfast parlour, when he came running into us, out of breath, with the paper in his hand. Here! says he, here 's news for ye! *Here 's the king of Prussia, claiming a right to this kingdom!* All stared, and I as much as any body; and he went on to read it. When he had read two or three paragraphs, a gentleman present said, *Damn his impudence, I dare say, we shall hear by next post that he is upon his march with one hundred thousand men to back this.* Whitehead, who is very shrewd, soon after began to smoke it, and looking in my face said, *I 'll be hanged if this is not some of your American jokes upon us.* The reading went on, and ended with abundance of laughing, and a general verdict that it was a fair hit: and the piece was cut out of the paper and preserved in my lord's collection.

I don't wonder that Hutchinson should be dejected. It must be an uncomfortable thing to live among people who he is conscious universally detest him. Yet I fancy he will not have leave to come home, both because they know not well what to do with him, and because they do not very well like his conduct.

I am ever your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable Thomas Cushing, Esq.

London, Nov. 1, 1773.

SIR,

I DULY received your favor of 26th of August, with the letter inclosed for lord Dartmouth, which I immediately sent to him. As soon as he comes to town, I shall wait upon his lordship, and discourse with him upon the subject of it; and I shall immediately write to you what I can collect from the conversation.

In my own opinion, the letter of the two houses of the 29th June, proposing, as a satisfactory measure, the restoring

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things to the state in which they were at the conclusion of the late war, is a fair and generous offer on our part, and my discourse here is, that it is more than Britain has a right to expect from us; and that if she has any wisdom left she will embrace it, and agree with us immediately; for that the longer she delays the accommodation, which finally she must for her own sake obtain, the worse terms she may expect, since the inequality of power and importance that at present subsists between us is daily diminishing, and our sense of our own rights, and of her injustice, continually increasing. I am the more encouraged to hold such language, by perceiving that the general sense of the nation is for us; a conviction prevailing that we have been ill used, and that a breach with us would be ruinous to this country. The pieces I wrote to increase and strengthen those sentiments, were more read, and talked of, and attended to than usual. The first, as you will see by the inclosed, has been called for and reprinted in the same paper, besides being copied in others, and in the magazines. A long labored answer has been made to it (by governor Bernard it is said) which I send you. I am told it does not satisfy those in whose justification it was written, and that a better is preparing. I think with you, that great difficulties must attend an attempt to make a new representation of our grievances, in which the point of right should be kept out of sight, especially as the concurrence of so many colonies seems now necessary. And therefore it would certainly be best and wisest for parliament (which does not meet till after the middle of January) to make up the matter themselves, and at once reduce things to the state desired. There are not wanting some here who believe this will really be the case; for that a new election being now in view, the present members are likely to consider the composing all differences with America, as a measure agreeable to the trading and manufacturing part of the nation; and that the neglecting it may be made use of by their opponents to their disadvantage.

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I have as yet received no answer to the petition for removing the governors. I imagine that it will hardly be complied with, as it would embarrass government to provide for them otherwise, and it will be thought hard to neglect men who have exposed themselves, by adhering to what is here called the interest and rights of this country. But this I only conjecture, as I have heard nothing certain about it. Indeed I should think continuing them in their places would be rather a punishment than a favor. For what comfort can men have in living among a people with whom they are the object of universal odium.

I shall continue here one winter longer, and use my best endeavors as long as I stay for the service of our country.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq., Philadelphia.

London, Nov. 3, 1773.

SIR,

THERE is at present great quietness here, and no prospect that the war between the Turks and Russians will spread farther in Europe. The last harvest is allowed to have been generally plentiful in this country; and yet such was the preceding scantiness of crops, that it is thought there is no corn to spare for exportation, which continues the advantages to our corn provinces.

The parliament is not to meet till after the middle of January. It is said there is a disposition to compose all differences with America before the next general election, as the trading and manufacturing part of the nation are generally our well wishers, think we have been hardly used, and apprehend ill consequences from a continuance of the measures that we complain of: and that if those measures are not changed, an American interest may be spirited up at the election against the present members who are in, or friends to administration. Our steady refusal to take tea from hence

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for several years past has made its impressions. The scheme for supplying us without repealing the act, by a temporary licence from the treasury to export tea to America, free of duty, you are before this time acquainted with. I much want to hear how that tea is received. If it is rejected the act will undoubtedly be repealed, otherwise I suppose it will be continued; and when we have got into the use of the company's tea, and the foreign correspondences that supply us at present, are broken off, the licences will be discontinued, and the act enforced.

I apprehend the better understanding that lately subsisted in our provincial administration will hardly be continued with the new governor; but you will soon see. I wish for the full letter you promise me by the next packet, which is now daily expected.

With unalterable esteem and attachment, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

London, Nov. 3, 1773.

DEAR SON,

I WROTE you pretty fully by the last packet, and having had no line from you of later date than the beginning of August, and little stirring here lately, I have now little to write.

In that letter I mentioned my having written two papers, of which I preferred the first, but the public the last. It seems I was mistaken in judging of the public opinion; for the first was reprinted some weeks after in the same paper, the printer giving for reason, that he did it in compliance with the earnest request of many private persons, and some respectable societies; which is the more extraordinary as it had been copied in several other papers, and in the Gentleman's Magazine.[e] Such papers may seem to have a tendency to increase

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[e] Preface by the British editor [*Dr. Franklin*] to the votes and proceedings of the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town of Boston.

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our divisisons, but I intend a contrary effect, and hope by comprising in little room, and setting in a strong light the grievances of the colonies, more attention will be paid them by our administration, and that when their unreasonableness is generally seen, some of them will be removed to the restoration of harmony between us.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable Thomas Cushing, Esq.

London, Jan. 5, 1774.

SIR,

I RECEIVED the honor of yours dated October 28, with the Journals of the house and Mr. Turner's election sermon.

I waited on lord Dartmouth on his return to town, and learnt that he had presented to his majesty our petition for the removal of the governors. No subsequent step had yet been taken upon it: but his lordship said, the king would probably refer the consideration of it to a committee of council, and that I should have notice to be heard in support of it. By the turn of his conversation, though he was not explicit, I apprehend the petition is not likely to be complied with: but we shall see. His lordship expressed as usual much concern at the differences subsisting, and wished they would be accommodated. Perhaps his good wishes are all that is in his power.

The famous letters having unfortunately engaged Mr. Temple and Mr. Wheatly in a duel, which being interrupted would probably be renewed, I thought it incumbent on me to prevent, as far as I could, any farther mischief, by declaring publicly the part I had in the affair of those letters, and thereby at the same time to rescue Mr. Temple's character from an undeserved and groundless imputation, that bore hard upon his honor, viz. that of taking the letters from Mr.

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in town meeting assembled, according to law, (published by order of the town) &c. Boston, printed: London, reprinted and sold by J. Wilkie, St. Paul's Church Yard, 1773.

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Wheatly, and in breach of confidence. I did this with the more pleasure, as I believe him a sincere friend to our country. I am told by some that it was imprudent in me to avow the obtaining and sending those letters, for that administration will resent it. I have not much apprehension of this, but if it happens I must take the consequences. I only hope it will not affect any friend on your side of the water, for I have never mentioned *to whom* they were transmitted.

A letter of mine to you, printed in one of the Boston papers, has lately been reprinted here, to show, as the publisher expresses it, that I am "*one of the most determined enemies* of the welfare and prosperity of Great Britain." In the opinion of some, every one who wishes the good of the *whole empire*, may nevertheless be an enemy to *the welfare of Great Britain*, if he does not wish its good *exclusively* of every other *part*, and to see its welfare built on their servitude and wretchedness. Such an enemy I certainly am. But methinks 'tis wrong to print letters of mine at Boston which give occasion to these reflections.

I shall continue to do all I possibly can this winter towards an accommodation of our differences; but my hopes are small. Divine Providence first infatuates the power it designs to ruin.

With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

London, Jan. 5, 1774.

DEAR SON,

I RECEIVED yours of October 29 and November 2. Your December packet is not yet arrived.

No insinuations of the kind you mention, concerning Mr. G————y have reached me, and if they had, it would have been without the least effect; as I have always had the strongest reliance on the steadiness of his friendship, and on the

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best grounds, the knowledge I have of his integrity, and the often repeated disinterested services he has rendered me. My return will interfere with nobody's interest or influence in public affairs, as my intention is to decline all interest in them, and every active part, except where it can serve a friend, and to content myself with communicating the knowledge of them my situation may have furnished me with, and be content with giving my advice for the public benefit, where it may be asked, or where I shall think it may be attended to: for being now about entering my sixty-ninth year, and having lived so great a part of my life to the public, it seems but fair that I should be allowed to live the small remainder to myself and to my friends.

If the honorable office you mention will be agreeable to him, I heartily wish it him. I only hope that if offered to him, he will insist on its being not during pleasure but *quamdiu se bene gesserit.*

Our friend Temple, as you will see by the papers, has been engaged in a duel, about an affair in which he had no concern. As the combat was interrupted, and understood to be unfinished, I thought it incumbent on me to do what I could for preventing farther mischief, and so declared my having transmitted the letters in question. This has drawn some censure upon myself, but as I grow old, I grow less concerned about censure, when I am satisfied that I act rightly, and I have the pleasure of having exculpated a friend who lay undeservedly under an imputation much to his dishonor.

I am now seriously preparing for my departure to America. I purpose sending my luggage, books, instruments, &c. by All or Falconer, and take my passage to New York in one of the spring or summer packets, partly for settling some business with the Post-office there, and partly that I may see you on my way to Philadelphia, and learn thereby more perfectly the state of affairs there.

Your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the Printer of the Public Advertiser.

SIR,

THE inclosed paper was written just before lord Hillsborough quitted the American department. An expectation then prevailing, from the good character of the noble lord who succeeded him, that the grievances of the colonies would under his administration be redressed, it was laid aside; but as not a single measure of his predecessor has since been even attempted to be changed, and on the contrary new ones have been continually added, farther to exasperate, render them desperate, and drive them if possible into open rebellion, it may not be amiss now to give it the public, as it shows in detail the rise and progress of those differences which are about to break the empire in pieces.

I am sir, yours, &c. A. P.

SIR,

IT is a bad temper of mind that takes a delight in opposition, and is ever ready to censure ministry in the gross, without discrimination. Charity should be willing to believe, that we never had an administration so bad but there might be some good and some wise men in it; and that even such is our case at present. The scripture saith, by their works, shall ye know them. By their conduct then, in their respective departments, and not by their company or their party connections, should they be distinctly and separately judged.

One of the most serious affairs to this nation, that has of late required the attention of government, is our misunderstanding with the colonies. They are in the department of lord Hillsborough, and from a prevailing opinion of his abilities, have been left by the other ministers very much to his management. If then our American business has been conducted with prudence, to him chiefly will be due the reputation of it.

Soon after the late war, it became an object with the ministers of this country to draw a revenue from America. The

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first attempt was by a stamp act. It soon appeared that this step had not been well considered; that the rights, the ability, the opinions, and temper of that great people had not been sufficiently attended to. They complained that the tax was *unnecessary*, because their assemblies had ever been ready to make voluntary grants to the crown, in proportion to their abilities, when duly required so to do; and *unjust*, because they had no representative in the British parliament, but had parliaments of their own, wherein their consent was *given* as it *ought to be*, in *grants* of their own money. I do not mean to enter into this question. The parliament repealed the act, as inexpedient, but in another act asserted a right of taxing America. And in the following year laid duties on the manufactures of this country exported thither. On the repeal of the stamp act, the Americans had returned to their wonted good humour and commerce with Britain; but this new act for laying duties renewed their uneasiness. They were long since forbidden by the navigation act, to purchase manufactures of any other nation, and supposing that act well enforced, they saw by this indirect mode, it was in the power of Britain to burthen them as much as by any direct tax, unless they could lay aside the use of such manufactures as they had been accustomed to purchase from Britain, or make the same themselves.

In this situation were affairs when my lord Hillsborough entered on the American administration. Much was expected from his supposed abilities, application, and knowledge of business in that department. The newspapers were filled with his panegyrics, and expectations raised perhaps inconveniently.

The Americans determined to petition their sovereign, praying his gracious interposition in their favor with his parliament, that the imposition of these duties which they considered as an infringement of their rights, might be repealed. The assembly of the Massachusetts bay had voted that it should be proposed to the other colonies to concur in that measure. This, for what reason I do not easily conceive,

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gave great offence to his lordship; and one of his first steps was to prevent these concurring petitions. To this end, he sent a mandate to that assembly (the parliament of that country) requiring them to RESCIND that vote and desist from the measure, threatening them with dissolution in case of disobedience. The governor communicated to them the instructions he received to that purpose. They refused to obey, and were dissolved! Similar orders were sent at the same time to the governors of the other colonies, to dissolve their respective parliaments, if they presumed to accede to the Boston propositon of petitioning his majesty, and several of them were accordingly dissolved.

Bad ministers have ever been averse to the right subjects claim of petitioning and remonstrating to their sovereign: for through that channel the prince may be apprized of the mal-administration of his servants; they may sometimes be thereby brought into danger; at least such petitions afford a handle to their adversaries, whereby to give them trouble. But as the measure to be complained of, was not his lordship's, it is rather extraordinary that he should thus set his face against the intended complaints. In his angry letters to America, he called the proposal of these petitions "a measure of most *dangerous* and *factious* tendency, calculated to enflame the minds of his majesty's subjects in the colonies, to promote an *unwarrantable combination*, and to excite and encourage an *open opposition* to and denial *of the authority of parliament*, and *to subvert the true spirit of the constitution*;" and directed the governors, immediately on the receipt of these orders, to exert their utmost influence "to defeat this FLAGITIOUS attempt."

Without entering into the particular motives to this piece of his lordship's conduct, let us consider a little the wisdom of it. When subjects conceive themselves oppressed or injured, laying their complaints before the sovereign, or the governing powers, is a kind of vent to griefs that gives some ease to their minds; the receiving with at least an *appearance* of

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regard, their petitions, and taking them into consideration, gives present hope, and affords time for the cooling of resentment; so that even the refusal when decently expressed and accompanied with reasons, is made less unpleasant by the manner, is half approved, and the rest submitted to with patience. But when this vent to popular discontents is denied, and the subjects are thereby driven to desperation, infinite mischiefs follow. Many princes have lost part, and some the whole of their dominions, and some their lives by this very conduct of their servants. The secretary for America therefore seems, in this instance, not to have judged rightly for the service of his excellent master.

But supposing the measure of discouraging and *preventing* petitions a right one, were the means of effecting this end judiciously chosen? I mean, the threatening with *dissolution* and the actual dissolving of the American parliaments. His lordship probably took up the idea from what he knows of the state of things in England and Ireland, where to be rechosen upon a dissolution often gives a candidate great trouble, and sometimes costs him a great deal of money. A dissolution may therefore be both fine and punishment to the members, if they desire to be again returned. But in most of the colonies there is no such thing as standing candidate for election. There is neither treating nor bribing. No man even expresses the least inclination to be chosen. Instead of humble advertisements intreating votes and interst, you see before every new election, requests of former members, acknowledging the honor done them by preceding elections, but setting forth their long service and attendance on the public business in that station, and praying that in consideration thereof some other person may be chosen in their room. Where this is the case, where the same representatives may be, and generally are after a dissolution, chosen without asking a vote or giving even a glass of cyder to an elector, is it likely that such a threat could contribute in the least to answer the end proposed. The experience of former governors, might have instructed his lordship, that this was a vain expe-

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dient. Several of them misled by their English ideas, had tried this practice, to make assemblies submissive to their measures, but never with success. By the influence of his power in granting offices, a governor naturally has a number of friends in an assembly; these, if suffered to continue, though a minority, might frequently serve his purposes, by promoting what he wishes, or obstructing what he dislikes. But, if to punish the majority, he in a pet dissolves the house, and orders a new election, he is sure not to see a single friend in the new assembly. The people are put into an ill humor by the trouble given them, they resent the dissolution as an affront, and leave out every man suspected of having the least regard for the governor. This was the very effect of my lord's dissolutions in America, and the new assemblies were all found more untractable than the old ones.

But besides the imprudence of this measure, was it constitutional? The crown has doubtless the prerogative of dissolving parliaments, a prerogative lodged in its hands for the public good, which may in various instances require the use of it. But should a king of Great Britain demand of his parliament the rescision of any vote they had passed, or forbid them to petition the throne, *on pain of dissolution*, and actually dissolve them accordingly; I humbly conceive the minister who advised it would run some hazard of censure at least, for thus using the prerogative to the violation of *common right*, and breach of the constitution. The American assembly have no means of impeaching such a minister; but there is an assembly, the parliament of England, that have that power, and in a former instance exercised it well, by impeaching a great man (lord Clarendon) for having (though in one instance only) *endeavored to introduce arbitrary government into the colonies.*

The effect this operation of the American secretary had in America, was not a prevention of those petitions as he intended, but a despair in the people of any success from them, since they could not pass to the throne, but through the hands of one who showed himself so extremely averse to the exis-

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tence of them. Thence arose the design of interesting the British merchants and manufacturers, in the event of their petitions, by agreements not to import goods from Great Britain till their grievances were redressed. Universal resentment occasioned these agreements to be more generally entered into, and the sending troops to Boston, who daily insulted the assembly* and townsmen, instead of terrifying into a compliance with his measures, served only to exasperate and sour the minds of people throughout the continent, make frugality fashionable, when the consumption of British goods was the question, and determine the inhabitants to exert every nerve in establishing manufactures among themselves.

Boston having grievously offended his lordship, by the refractory spirit they had shown in rechusing those representatives, whom he esteemed the leaders of the opposition there, he resolved to punish that town, by removing the assembly from thence to Cambridge, a country place about four miles distant. Here too his lordship's English and Irish ideas seem to have misled him. Removing a parliament from London or Dublin, where so many of the inhabitants are supported by the expense of such a number of wealthy lords and commoners, and have a dependance on that support, may be a considerable prejudice to a city, deprived of such advantage; but the removal of the assembly, consisting of frugal honest farmers, from Boston, could only affect the interest of a few poor widows who keep lodging houses there. Whatever manufactures the members might want, were still purchased at Boston. They themselves, indeed, suffered some inconvenience, in being perhaps less commodiously lodged, and being at a distance from the records; but this, and the keeping them before so long prorogued, when the public affairs required their meeting, could never reconcile them to ministerial measures, it could serve only to put them more out of hu-

* They mounted a numerous guard daily round the parliament house, with drums beating and fifes playing while the members were in their debates, and had cannon planted and pointed at the building.

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mor with Britain and its government so wantonly exercised, and to so little purpose. Ignorance alone of the true state of that country, can excuse (if it may be excused) these frivolous procedings.

To have *good ends* in view and to use *proper means* to obtain them, shews the minster to be both *good* and *wise*. To pursue *good ends* by *improper means*, argues him though *good*, to be but *weak*. To pursue *bad ends* by *artful means*, shows him to be *wicked* though *able*. But when his *ends* are *bad* and the means he uses *improper* to obtain these ends, what shall we say of such a minister! Every step taken for some time past in our treatment of America, the suspending their legislative powers, for not making laws *by direction* from hence; the countenancing their adversaries by rewards and pensions, paid out of the revenues extorted from them, by laws to which they have not given their assent; the sending over a set of rash indiscreet commissioners to collect that revenue, who by insolence of behaviour, harrassing commerce, and perpetually accusing the good people (out of whose substance they are supported) to government here, as rebels and traitors, have made themselves universally odious there, but here are caressed and encouraged; together with the arbitrary dissolution of assemblies, and the quartering troops among the people, to menace and insult them; all these steps if intended to provoke them to rebellion, that we might take their lives and confiscate their estates, are proper means to obtain a bad end: but if they are intended to conciliate the Americans to our government, restore our commerce with them, and secure the friendship and assistance which their growing strength wealth and power may in a few years render extremely valuable to us,—can any thing be conceived more injudicious, more absurd! His lordship may have in general a good understanding, his friends say he has; but in the political part of it, there must surely be some *twist*, some extreme *obliquity*.

A well wisher to the King and all his dominions

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To the Printer of the Public Advertiser.

SIR,

YOUR correspondent Britannicus, inveighs violently against Dr. Franklin, for his ingratitude to the ministry of this nation, who have conferred upon him so many favors. They gave him the Post-office of America; they made his son a governor; and they offered him a post of five hundred a year in the salt office, if he would relinquish the interests of his country; but he has had the wickedness to continue true to it, and is as much an American as ever. As it is a settled point in government here, that every man has his price, 'tis plain they are bunglers in their business, and have not given him enough. Their master has as much reason to be angry with them, as Rodrigue in the play, with his apothecary, for not effectually poisoning Pandolpho, and they must probably make use of the apothecary's justification viz.

SCENE IV.

Rodrigue and *Fell* the Apothecary.

Rodrigue. You promised to have this Pandolpho upon his bier in less than a week; 'tis more than a month since, and he still walks and stares me in the face.

Fell. True; and yet I have done my best endeavors. In various ways I have given the miscreant as much poison as would have killed an elephant. He has swallowed dose after dose;—far from hurting him, he seems the better for it. He hath a wonderfully strong constitution. I find I cannot kill him but by cutting his throat, and that, as I take it, is not my business.

Rodrigue. Then it must be mine.

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To the same.

SIR,

NOTHING can equal the present rage of our ministerial writers against our brethren in America, who have the misfortune to be *whigs*, in a reign when *whiggism* is out of fashion, who are besides protestant dissenters and lovers of liberty. One may easily see from what quarter comes the abuse of those people in the papers; their struggle for their rights is called REBELLION, and the people REBELS; while those who really rebelled in Scotland (1745), for the expulsion of the present reigning family, and the establishment of popery and arbitrary power, on the ruins of liberty and protestantism; who entered England and marched on as far as Derby, to the astonishment of this great city, and shaking the public credit of the nation; have now all their sins forgiven, on account of their modish principles, and are called not *rebels*, but by the softer appellation of *insurgents!* These angry writers use their utmost efforts to persuade us, that this war with the colonies (for a war it will be) is a national cause, when in fact it is merely a ministerial one. Administration wants an American revenue to dissipate in corruption. The quarrel is about a paltry three-penny duty on tea. There is no real clashing of interests between Britain and America. Their commerce is to their mutual advantage, or rather most to the advantage of Britain, which finds a vast market in America for its manufactures; and *as good pay*, I speak from knowledge, as in any country she trades to upon the face of the globe. But the fact needs not my testimony, it speaks for itself, for if we could elsewhere get better pay and better prices, we should not send our goods to America.

The gross calumniators of that people, who want us to imbrue our hands in brother's blood, have the effrontery to tell the world that the Americans associated in resolutions not to pay us what they owed us, unless we repealed the stamp act. This is an INFAMOUS FALSEHOOD; they know it to be such. I call upon the incendiaries, who have advanced it, to produce

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their proofs. Let them name any two that entered into such an association, or any one that made such a declaration. Absurdity marks the very face of this lie. Every one acquainted with trade knows, that a credited merchant, daring to be concerned in such an association, could never expect to be trusted again. His character on the Exchange of London would be ruined for ever. The great credit given them since that time, nay the present debt due from them, is itself a proof of the confidence we have in their probity. Another villainous falsehood advanced against the Americans is, that though we have been at such expense in protecting them, they refuse to contribute their part to the public general expense of the empire. The fact is, that *they never did refuse a requisition of that kind.* A writer who calls himself *Sagittarius* (I suppose from his flinging about, like Solomon's fool, firebrands, *arrows*, and death) in the Ledger of March 9th asserts, that the "Experiment has been tried, and that they did not think it expedient to return even an answer." How does he prove this? Why, "the colony agents were told by Mr. Grenville, that a revenue *would be* required from them to defray the expenses of their protection." But was the requisition ever made? Were circular letters ever sent by his majesty's command, from the secretary of state to the several colony governments, according to the established custom, stating the occasion, and requiring such supplies as were suitable to their abilities and loyalty? And did they then refuse not only compliance but an answer? No such matter, agents are not the channel through which requisitions are made. If they were told by Mr. Grenville that a "revenue *would be* required, and yet the colonies made no offer, no grant, nor laid any tax," does it follow they would not have done it if they had been required? Probably they thought it time enough when the *requisition* should come, and in fact it never appeared there to this day. In the last war, they all gave so liberally, that we thought ourselves bound in honor to return them a million. But we are disgusted with their free gifts; we want to have something that is obtained by force, like a mad land-

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lord who should refuse the willing payment of his full rents, and choose to take less by way of robbery.

This shameless writer would cajole the people of England with the fancy of their being kings of America, and that their honor is at stake by the Americans disputing *their* government. He thrusts us into the throne, cheek-by-jole with majesty, and would have us talk as he writes, of *our* subjects in America, and *our sovereignty* over America: forgetting that the Americans are subjects of the king, not *our* subjects, but our *fellow subjects;* and that they have parliaments of their own, with the right of granting their own money, by their own representatives, which we cannot deprive them of but by violence and injustice.

Having by a series of iniquitous and irritating measures provoked a loyal people almost to desperation, we now magnify every act of an American mob into REBELLION, though the government there disapprove it and order prosecution, as is now the case with regard to the tea destroyed: and we talk of nothing but troops, and fleets, and force; of blocking up ports, destroying fisheries, abolishing charters, &c. &c. Here mobs of English sawyers can burn saw mills; mobs of English laborers destroy or plunder magazines of corn; mobs of English coal-heavers attack houses with fire arms; English smugglers can fight regularly the king's crusing vessels, drive them ashore and burn them, as lately on the coast of Wales, and on the coast of Cornwall; but upon these accounts we hear no talk of England's being in *rebellion;* no threats of taking away its Magna Charta, or repealing its Bill of Rights: for we well know, that the operations of a mob are often unexpected, sudden and soon over, so that the civil power can seldom prevent or suppress them, not being able to come in before they have dispersed themselves; and therefore it is not always accountable for their mischiefs.

Surely the great commerce of this nation with the Americans is of too much importance to be risked in a quarrel, which has no foundation but ministerial pique and obstinacy!

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To us in the way of trade comes now, and has long come, all the super lucration arising from their labors. But will our reviling them as cheats, hypocrites, scoundrels, traitors, cowards, tyrants, &c. &c. according to the present court mode, in all our papers, make them more our friends, more fond of our merchandise? Did ever any tradesman succeed who attempted to drub customers into his shop? And will honest JOHN BULL, the farmer, be long satisfied with servants that before his face attempt to kill his *plough horses?*

(Signed) *A Londoner.*

[Written by B. F.]

To Dr. Price.

Philadelphia, Oct. 3, 1775.

DEAR SIR,

I WISH as ardently as you can do for peace, and should rejoice exceedingly in co-operating with you to that end. But every ship from Britain brings some intelligence of new measures, that tend more and more to exasperate; and it seems to me that, until you have found by dear experience the reducing us by force impracticable, you will think of nothing fair and reasonable.

We have as yet resolved only on defensive measures. If you would recall your forces and stay at home, we should meditate nothing to injure you. A little time so given for cooling on both sides would have excellent effects. But you will goad and provoke us. You despise us too much—and you are insensible of the Italian adage, that there is no *little enemy.* I am persuaded that the body of the British people are our friends, but they are changeable; and, by your lying gazettes, may soon be made our enemies. Our respect for them will proportionably diminish, and I see clearly we are on the high road to mutual hatred and detestation. A separation of course will be inevitable. 'Tis a million of pities so fair a plan as we have hitherto been engaged in for increasing strength and empire, with public felicity, should be destroyed by the mangling hands of a few blundering minis-

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ters. It will not be destroyed: God will protect and prosper it: you will only exclude yourselves from any share in it. We hear that more ships and troops are coming out. We know that you may do us a great deal of mischief, but we are determined to bear it patiently, as long as we can. But if you flatter yourselves with beating us into submission, you know neither the people nor the country. The congress is still sitting, and will wait the result of their *last* petition.

Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Cooper.

Passy, April 22, 1779.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your valuable letter by the marquis de la Fayette; and another by Mr. Bradford. I can now only write a few words in answer to the latter, the former not being at hand. The depreciation of our money, must, as you observe, greatly affect salary men, widows, and orphans. Methinks this evil deserves the attention of the several legislatures, and ought, if possible, to be remedied by some equitable law, particularly adapted to their circumstances. I took all the pains I could in congress to prevent the depreciation, by proposing, first, that the bills should bear interest: this was rejected, and they were struck as you see them. Secondly, after the first emission I proposed that we should stop, strike no more, but borrow on interest those we had issued. This was not then approved of, and more bills were issued. When from the too great quantity they began to depreciate, we agreed to borrow on interest, and I proposed, that in order to fix the value of the principal, the interest should be promised in hard dollars. This was objected to as impracticable: but I still continue of opinion, that by sending out cargoes to purchase it, we might have brought in money sufficient for that purpose, as we brought in powder, &c. &c. And that though the attempt

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must have been attended with a disadvantage, the loss would have been a less mischief than any measure attending the discredit of the bills, which threatens to take out of our hands the great instrument of our defence. The congress did at last come into the proposal of paying the interest in real money. But when the whole mass of the currency was *under way* in depreciation, the *momentum* of its descent was too great, to be stopt by a power that might at first have been sufficient to prevent the beginning of the motion. The *only remedy* now seems to be a diminution of the quantity by a vigorous taxation, of great *nominal* sums, which the people are more able to pay, in proportion to the quantity and diminished value; and the *only consolation* under the evil is, that the public debt is proportionably diminished with the depreciation: and this by a kind of imperceptible tax, every one having paid a part of it in the fall of value, that took place between the receiving and paying such sums as passed through his hands. For it should always be remembered, that the original intention was to sink the bills by taxes, which would as effectually extinguish the debt as an actual redemption. This effect of paper currency is not understood on this side the water. And indeed the whole is a mystery even to the politicians, how we have been able to continue a war four years without money, and how we could pay with paper, that had no previously fixed fund appropriated specifically to redeem it. This currency as we manage it, is a wonderful machine. It performs its office when we issue it; it pays and clothes troops, and provides victuals and ammunition; and when we are obliged to issue a quantity excessive, it pays itself off by depreciation.

Our affairs in general stand in a fair light throughout Europe. Our cause is universally approved. Our constitutions of government have been translated and printed in most languages, and are so much admired for the spirit of liberty that reigns in them, that it is generally agreed we shall have a vast accession of national property after the war, from every

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part of this continent, and particularly from the British islands. We have only to persevere and to be happy.

Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable Josiah Quincy, Esq.

Passy, April 22, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your very kind letter by Mr. Bradford, who appears a very sensible and amiable young gentleman, to whom I should with pleasure render any service here, upon your much respected recommendation; but I understand he returns immediately.

It is with great sincerity I join you in acknowleging and admiring the dispensation of Providence in our favor. America has only to be thankful and persevere. God will finish his work, and establish their freedom: and the lovers of liberty will flock from all parts of Europe, with their fortunes to participate with us of that freedom—as soon as peace is restored.

I am exceedingly pleased with your account of the French politeness and civility, as it appeared among the officers and people of their fleet. They have certainly advanced in those respects many degrees beyond the English. I find them here a most amiable nation to live with. The Spaniards are by common opinion supposed to be cruel, the English proud, the Scotch insolent, the Dutch avaricious, &c. but I think the French have no national vice ascribed to them. They have some frivolities, but they are harmless. To dress their heads so that a hat cannot be put on them, and then wear their hats under their arms, and to fill their noses with tobacco, may be called follies perhaps, but they are not vices, they are only the effects of the tyranny of custom. In short, there is nothing wanting in the character of a Frenchman, that belongs to that of an agreeable and worthy man. They have only some trifles, a surplus of which might be spared.

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Will you permit me, while I do them this justice, to hint a little censure on our own country people? which I do in good will, wishing the cause removed. You know the necessity we are under of supplies from Europe, and the difficulty we have at present in making returns. The interest bills would do a good deal towards purchasing arms, ammunition, clothing, sailcloth, and other necessaries for defence. Upon inquiry of those who present those bills to me for acceptance, what the money is to be laid out in, I find that most of it is for superfluities, and more than half of it for tea! How unhappily in this instance the folly of our people, and the avidity of our merchants, concur to weaken and impoverish our country! I formerly computed that we consumed before the war, in that single article, the value of five hundred thousand pounds sterling annually. Much of this was saved by stopping the use of it. I honored the virtuous resolution of our women, in foregoing that little gratification, and I lament that such virtue should be of so short duration! Five hundred thousand pounds sterling annually, laid out in defending ourselves, or annoying our enemies, would have great effects. With what face can we ask aids and subsidies from our friends, while we are wasting our own wealth in such prodigality?

With great and sincere esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Marquis de la Fayette, at Havre-de-Grace.

Passy, August 19, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just now received your favor of the 17th. I wrote to you a day or two ago, and have little to add. You ask my opinion, what conduct the English will probably hold on this occasion, and whether they will not rather propose a negociation for a peace: I have but one rule to go by in judging of those people, which is, that whatever is prudent for them to do they will omit; and what is most imprudent to be done, they will do it. This, like all other general rules, may some-

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time have its exceptions; but I think it will hold good for the most part, at least while the present ministry continues, or rather *while the present madman* has the choice of ministers.

You desire to know whether I am satisfied with the ministers here? It is impossible for any to be more so. I see they exert themselves greatly in the common cause, and do every thing for us they can. We can wish for nothing more, unless our great want of money should make us wish for a subsidy, to enable us to act more vigorously in expelling the enemy from their remaining posts, and reducing Canada. But their own expenses are so great, that I cannot press such an addition to it. I hope however, that we shall get some supplies of arms and ammunition; and perhaps, when they can be spared, some ships to aid in reducing New York and Rhode Island. At present I know of no good opportunity of writing to America. There are merchant ships continually going, but they are very uncertain conveyances. I long to hear of your safe arrival in England: but the winds are adverse, and we must have patience.

With the sincerest esteem and respect, I am, ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Marquis de la Fayette.

(With the Sword ordered by congress.)

Passy, August 24, 1779.

SIR,

THE congress, sensible of your merit towards the United States, but unable adequately to reward it, determined to present you with a sword, as a small mark of their grateful acknowledgment. They directed it to be ornamented with suitable devices. Some of the principal actions of the war, in which you distinguished yourself by your bravery and conduct, are therefore represented upon it. These with a few emblematic figures, all admirably well executed, make its principal value. By the help of the exquisite artists France affords, I find it easy to express every thing but the sense we

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have of your worth, and our obligations to you. For this, figures and even words are found insufficient.

I therefore only add, that with the most perfect esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. My grandson goes to Havre with the sword, and will have the honor of presenting it to you.

To Dr. Cooper.

Passy, Oct. 27, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

IT is a long time since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you. The intelligence you were used to favor me with, was often useful to our affairs. I hope I have not lost your friendship, together with your correspondence. Our excellent Mr. Winthrop, I see, is gone. He was one of those old friends for the sake of whose society I wished to return and spend the small remnant of my days in New England. A few more such deaths will make me a stranger in my own country. The loss of friends is the tax a man pays for living long himself. I find it a heavy one.

You will see by the newspapers that we have given some disturbance to the British coasts this year. One little privateer out of Dunkerque, the Black Prince, with a congress commission, and a few Americans mixed with Irish and English smugglers, went round their islands and took thirty-seven prizes in less than three months. The little squadron of commodore Jones, under the same commissions and colors, has alarmed those coasts exceedingly, occasioned a good deal of internal expense, done great damage to their trade, and taken two frigates, with four hundred prisoners. He is now with his principal prizes in Holland, where he is pretty well received, but must quit that neutral country as soon as his damages are repaired. The English watch with a superior force, his coming out, but we hope he will manage so as to escape their vigilance. Few actions at sea have demonstrated

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such steady, cool determined bravery as that of Jones in taking the Serapis.

There has been much rumor this summer, throughout Europe, of an approaching peace, through the mediation of Russia and Holland: but it is understood to arise from the invention of stock-jobbers, and others interested in propagating such opinions. England seems not to be yet sufficiently humbled, to acknowledge the independence of the American states, or to treat with them on that footing, and our friends will not make a peace on any other. So we shall probably see another campaign.

By the invoices I have seen and heard of, sent hither with Congress Interest Bills of Exchange to purchase the goods, it should seem that there is not so great a want of necessaries as of superfluities among our people. It is difficult to conceive that your distresses can be great, when one sees that much the greatest part of that money is lavished in modes, gewgaws, and tea! Is it impossible for us to become wiser, when by simple economy and avoiding unnecessary expenses we might more than defray the charge of the war. We export solid provision of all kinds which is necessary for the sustenance of man, and we import fashions, luxuries, and trifles. Such trade may enrich the traders, but never the country.

The good will of all Europe to our cause, as being the cause of liberty, which is the cause of mankind, still continues; as does the universal wish to see the English pride humiliated, and their power curtailed. Those circumstances are encouraging, and give hopes of a happy issue. Which may God grant, and that you my friend, may live long a blessing to your country.

I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the Rev. Dr. Cooper.

Passy, May 25, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

IT gives me great pleasure to learn that your new constitution is at length settled, with so great a degree of unanimity and general satisfaction. It seems to me, upon the whole, an excellent one; and that if there are some particulars that one might have wished a little different, they are such as could not in the present state of things, have been well obtained, otherwise than they are, and if by experience found inconvenient, will probably be changed hereafter. I would only mention at present one article, that of maintenance for the clergy. It seems to me that by the constitution the quakers may be obliged to pay the tax for that purpose. But as the great end in imposing it is professedly the promotion of piety, religion, and morality, and those people have found means of securing that end among themselves without a regular clergy, and their teachers are not allowed to receive money; I should think it not right to tax them and give the money to the teacher of the parish; but I imagine that in the laws to be made for levying parish taxes, this matter may be regulated to their contentment.

Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable Robert Morris, Esq.,

Superintendant of the Finances of the United States.

Passy, July 26, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just received your very friendly letter of the 6th of June past, announcing your appointment to the superintendance of our finances. This gave me great pleasure, as from your intelligence, integrity, and abilities, there is reason to hope every advantage the public can possibly receive from such an office. You are wise in estimating before hand,

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as the principal advantage you can expect, the consciousness of having done service to your country. For the business you have undertaken is of so complex a nature, and must engross so much of your time and attention, as necessarily to hurt your private interests; and the public is often niggardly even of its thanks, resembling those little dirty stinking insects, that attack us only in the dark, disturb our repose, molesting and wounding us while our sweat and blood is contributing to their subsistence. Every assistance that my situation here, as long as it continues, may enable me to afford you, shall certainly be given. For besides my affection for the glorious cause we are both engaged in, I value myself upon your friendship, and shall be happy if mine can be made of any use to you.

With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, dear sir, &c. &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. With this I shall send an answer to your official letter of June 8.

To Sir Edward Newenham, Bart., Ireland.

Passy, Oct. 2, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just received your very kind letter of the 16th past. I rejoice sincerely to hear of your safe return to your own country, family, and friends, and of the success of your election.

It is a pleasing reflection arising from the contemplation of our successful struggle, and the manly, spirited, and unanimous resolves at Dungannon; that liberty, which some years since appeared in danger of extinction, is now regaining the ground she had lost, that arbitrary governments are likely to become more mild, and reasonable, and to expire by degrees, giving place to more equitable forms; one of the effects this of the art of printing, which diffuses so general a light, augmenting with the growing day, and of so penetrating a na-

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ture, that all the window shutters, despotism and priestcraft can oppose to keep it out, prove insufficient.

In answer to your question respecting what may be necessary to fix a trade between Ireland and America, I may acquaint you between ourselves, that there is some truth in the report you may have heard, of our desiring to know of Mr. Hartley whether he was empowered or instructed to include Ireland in the treaty of commerce proposed to us, and of his sending for instructions on that head, which never arrived. That treaty is yet open, may possibly be soon resumed, and it seems proper that something should be contained in it to prevent the doubts and misunderstandings that may hereafter arise on the subject, and secure to Ireland the same advantages in trade that England may obtain. You can best judge whether some law or resolution of your parliament may not be of use towards gaining that point.

My grandson joins me in wishes of every kind of felicity for you, lady Newenham, and all your amiable family. God bless you and give success to your constant endeavors for the welfare of your country.

With true and great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To David Hartley, Esq.

Passy, Jan. 7, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE this moment received your favor of the 25th past, acquainting me with the change in administration. I am not sure that in reforming the constitution, which is sometimes talked of, it would not be better to make your great officers of state hereditary than to suffer the inconvenience of such frequent and total changes. Much faction and cabal would be prevented by having an hereditary first lord of the treasury, an hereditary lord chancellor, privy seal, president of council, secretary of state, first lord of the admiralty, &c. &c. It will not be said that the duties of these offices being

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important, we cannot trust to nature for the chance of requisite talents, since we have an hereditary set of judges in the last resort, the house of peers; an hereditary king; and in a certain German university, an hereditary professor of mathematics.

We have not yet heard of the arrival of our express in America, who carried the definitive treaty. He sailed the 26th of September. As soon as the ratification arrives, I shall immediately send you word of it.

With great esteem I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To B. Vaughan, Esq.

Passy, March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

YOU mention that I may now see verified all you said about binding down England to so hard a peace. I suppose you do not mean by the American treaty; for we were exceeding favorable in not insisting on the reparations so justly due, for the wanton burnings of our fine towns and devastations of our plantations, in a war now universally allowed to have been originally unjust. I may add that you will also see verified all I said about the article respecting the royalists, that it will occasion more mischief than it was intended to remedy, and that it would have been better to have omitted all mention of them. England might have rewarded them according to their merits, at no very great expense. After the harms they had done to us, it was imprudent to insist on our doing them good.

I am sorry for the overturn you mention of those beneficial systems of commerce that would have been exemplary to mankind. The making England entirely a free port would have been the wisest step ever taken for its advantage.

I wish much to see what you say a respectable friend of mine has undertaken to write respecting the peace. It is a

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pity it has been delayed. If it had appeared earlier it might have prevented much mischief, by securing our friends in their situations; for we know not who will succeed them, nor what credit they will hold.

By my doubts of the propriety of my going soon to London, I meant no reflection on my friends or yours. If I had any call there besides the pleasure of seeing those I love, I should have no doubts. If I live to arrive there I shall certainly embrace your kind invitation, and take up my abode with you. Make my compliments and respects acceptable to Mrs. Vaughan.

I know not what foundation there can be for saying that I abuse England as much as before the peace. I am not apt, I think, to be abusive: of the two, I had rather be abused.

Inclosed are the letters you desire. I wish to hear from you more frequently, and to have through you, such new pamphlets as you may think worth my reading.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honorable John Jay, New York.

Passy, Feb. 8, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED, by the marquis de la Fayette, your kind letter of the 13th of December. It gave me pleasure on two other accounts, as it informed me of the public welfare, and that of your, I may almost say *our* dear little family; for since I had the pleasure of their being with me in the same house, I have ever felt a tender affection for them, equal I believe to that of most fathers. I did hope to have heard by the last packet of your having accepted the secretaryship of foreign affairs, but was disappointed. I write to you now therefore only as a private friend; yet I may mention respecting public affairs, that as far as I can perceive, the good disposition of this court towards us continues. I wish I could say as much for the rest of the European courts. I think,

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that their desire of being connected with us by treaties is of late much abated; and this I suppose occasioned by the pains Britain takes to represent us every where as distracted with divisions, discontented with our governments, the people unwilling to pay taxes, the congress unable to collect them, and many desiring the restoration of the old government. The English papers are full of this stuff, and their ministers get it copied into the foreign papers. The moving about of the congress from place to place, has also a bad effect, in giving colour to the reports of their being afraid of the people. I hope they will soon settle somewhere, and by the steadiness and wisdom of their measures dissipate all those mists of misrepresentation raised by the remaining malice of ancient enemies, and establish our reputation for national justice and prudence as they have done for courage and perseverance.

It grieves me that we have not been able to discharge our first year's payment of interest to this court, due the beginning of last month. I hope it will be the only failure, and that effectual measures will be taken to be exactly punctual hereafter. *The good paymaster,* says the proverb, *is lord of another man's purse.* The bad one, if he ever has again occasion to borrow, must pay dearly for his carelessness and injustice.

You are happy in having got back safe to your country. I should be less unhappy, if I could imagine the delay of my *congé* useful to the states, or in the least degree necessary. But they have many equally capable of doing all I have to do here. The new proposed treaties are the most important things; but two can go through them as well as three, if indeed any are likely to be completed, which I begin to doubt, since the new ones make little progress, and the old ones which wanted only the fiat of congress seem now to be rather going backward; I mean those I had projected with Denmark and Portugal.

My grandsons are sensible of the honor of your remembrance, and present their respects to you and Mrs. Jay. I add my best wishes of health and happiness to you all, being

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with sincere esteem and affection, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Small.

Philadelphia, Sept. 28, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of June 6, '86, and I answered it, though long after the receipt. I do not perceive by your second favor of July, '87, that my answer had then come to hand, but hope it may since that time.

I have not lost any of the principles of public economy you once knew me possessed of; but to get the bad customs of a country changed, and new ones, though better, introduced, it is necessary first to remove the prejudices of the people, enlighten their ignorance, and convince them that their interest will be promoted by the proposed changes: and this is not the work of a day. Our legislators are all landholders; and they are not yet persuaded that all taxes are finally paid by the land. Besides, our country is so sparely settled, the habitations, particularly in the back countries, being perhaps five or six miles distant from each other, that the time and labor of the collector, in going from house to house, and being obliged to call often before he can recover the tax, amounts to more than the tax is worth, and therefore we have been forced into the mode of indirect taxes, *i. e.* duties on importation of goods, and excises.

I have made no attempt to introduce the form of prayer here, which you, and good Mrs. Baldwin do me the honor to approve. The things of *this* world take up too much of my time, of which indeed I have too little left to undertake any thing like a reformation in matters of religion. When we can sow good seed, we should however do it, and wait, when we can do no better, with patience, nature's time for their sprouting. Some lie many years in the ground, and at length certain favorable seasons or circumstances bring them forth with vigorous shoots and plentiful productions.

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Had I been at home, as you wish, soon after the peace, I might possibly have mitigated some of the severities against the royalists, believing as I do, that fear and error, rather than malice, occasioned their desertion of their country's cause, and adoption of the king's. The public resentment against them is now so far abated, that none who ask leave to return are refused, and many of them now live among us much at their ease. As to the restoration of confiscated estates, it is an operation that none of our politicans have as yet ventured to propose. They are a sort of people that love to fortify themselves in their projects by precedent. Perhaps they wait to see your government restore the forfeited estates in Scotland to the Scotch, those in Ireland to the Irish, and those in England to the Welch.

I am glad that the distressed exiles who remain with you have received, or are likely to receive, some compensation for their losses, for I commiserate their situation. It was clearly incumbent on the king to indemnify those he had seduced by his proclamations: but it seems not so clearly consistent with the wisdom of parliament to resolve doing it for him. If some mad king should think fit in a freak to make war upon his subjects of Scotland, or upon those of England, by the help of Scotland and Ireland (as the Stuarts did), may he not encourage followers by the precedent of those parliamentary gratuities, and thus set his subjects to cutting one another's throats, first with the hope of sharing in confiscations, and then with that of compensation in case of disappointment? The council of brutes, without a fable, were aware of this. Lest that fable may perhaps not have fallen in your way, I inclose a copy of it.

Your commercial treaty with France seems to show a growing improvement in the sentiments of both nations in the economical science. All Europe might be a great deal happier with a little more understanding. We in America have lately had a convention for framing a new constitution. Inclosed I send you the result of their deliberations. Whether

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it will be generally acceptable, and carried into execution, is yet to be seen; but present appearances are in its favor.

I am always glad to hear from you, and of your welfare. I remember with pleasure the happy days we have spent together.

Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To M. Dupont de Nemours, at Paris.

Philadelphia, June 9, 1788.

SIR,

I HAVE received your favor of December 31, with the extract of a letter which you wish to have translated and published here. But seven states having, before it arrived, ratified the new contitution, and others being daily expected to do the same, after the fullest discussion in convention, and in all the public papers, till every body was tired of the argument, it seemed too late to propose delay, and especially the delay that must be occasioned by a revision and correction of all the separate constitutions. For it would take at least a year to convince thirteen states that the constitutions they have practised ever since the revolution, without observing any imperfections in them, so great as to be worth the trouble of amendment, are nevertheless so ill formed as to be unfit for continuation, or to be parts of a federal government. And when they should be so convinced, it would probably take some years more to make the connections. An eighth state has since acceded, and when a ninth is added, which is now daily expected, the constitution will be carried into execution. It is probable however, that at the first meeting of the new congress, various amendments will be proposed and discussed, when I hope your *Ouvrage sur les principes et le bien des republiques en general*, &c, &c., may be ready to put into their hands; and such a work from your hand, I am confident, though it may not be entirely followed, will afford useful hints, and produce advantages of importance. But we must not expect that a new

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government may be formed, as a game of chess may be played, by a skilful hand, without a fault. The players of our game are so many, their ideas so different, their prejudices so strong and so various, and their particular interests independent of the general seeming, so opposite, that not a move can be made that is not contested; the numerous objections confound the understanding; the wisest must agree to some unreasonable things, that reasonable ones of more consequence may be obtained, and thus chance has its share in many of the determinations, so that the play is more like *tric-trac* with a box of dice.

We are much pleased with the disposition of your government to favor our commerce, manifested in the late *réglement*. You appear to be possessed of a *truth*, which few governments are possessed of, that A must take some of B's produce, otherwise B will not be able to pay for what he would take of A. But there is one thing wanting to facilitate and augment our intercourse. It is a dictionary, explaining the names of different articles of manufacture, in the two languages. When I was in Paris, I received a large order for a great variety of goods, particularly of the kind called hardwares, i. e. wares of iron and steel: and when I shewed the invoice to your manufacturers, they did not understand what kinds of goods or instruments were meant by the names: nor could any English and French dictionary be found to explain them. So I sent to England for one of each sort, which might serve both as explanation and as a model, the latter being of importance likewise, since people are prejudiced in favor of *forms* they have been used to, though perhaps not the best. They cost me twenty-five guineas, but were lost by the way, and the peace coming on the scheme dropped. It would however, as I imagine, be well worth receiving. For our merchants say we still send to England for such goods as we want, because there they understand our orders, and can execute them precisely.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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To the Printer of the Evening Herald.

SIR,

THE British news-writers are very assiduous in their endeavors to blacken America. Should we not be careful not to afford them any assistance by censures of one another, especially by censures not well founded.

I lately observed in one of your papers, the conduct of the state of Massachusetts reflected on, as being inconsistent and absurd, as well as wicked, for attempting to raise a tax by a stamp act, and for carrying on the slave trade.

The writer of those reflections might have considered, that their principal objection to the stamp tax, was, its being imposed by a British parliament, which had no right to tax them; for otherwise a tax by stamps is perhaps to be levied with as little inconvenience as any other that can be invented. Ireland has a stamp act of its own; but should Britain pretend to impose such a tax on the Irish people they would probably give a general opposition to it, and ought not for that to be charged with inconsistence.

One or two merchants in Boston, employing ships in the abominable African trade, may deservedly be condemned, though they do not bring their slaves home, but sell them in the West Indies. The state as such, has never, that I have heard of, given encouragement to the diabolical commerce; and there has always been fewer slaves in the New England governments, than in any other British colonies. National reflections are seldom just, and a whole people should not be decried for the crimes of a few individuals.

Your inserting this may make that brave people some amends, and will oblige one of your customers, who is

A PENNSYLVANIAN.

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PRIVATE

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENCE.

PART II.*

RELATING TO NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE, &c.

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, near Paris, Oct. 14, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED duly your letter of May 2, '77, including a copy of one you had sent me the year before, which never came to hand, and which, it seems, has been the case with some I wrote to you from America. Filled, though our letters have always been, with sentiments of good will to both countries, and earnest desires of preventing their ruin and promoting their mutual felicity, I have been apprehensive that if it were known that a correspondence subsisted between us, it might be attended with inconvenience to you. I have therefore been backward in writing, not caring to trust the post, and not well knowing who else to trust with my letters. But being now assured of a safe conveyance, I venture to write to you, especially as I think the subject such a one as you may receive a letter upon without censure.

Happy should I have been, if the honest warnings I gave, of the fatal separation of interests as well as of affections, that must attend the measures, commenced while I was in England, had been attended to, and the horrid mischief of this abominable war been thereby prevented. I should still be happy in any successful endeavors for restoring peace, consistent with the liberties, the safety, and the honor of America. As to our submitting to the government of Great Britain, 'tis vain to think of it. She has given us, by her numberless barbarities,

* Part I. extends from p. 339 to 398 vol. V. of this edition.

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(by her malice in bribing slaves to murder their masters, and savages to massacre the families of farmers, with her baseness in rewarding the unfaithfulness of servants and debauching the virtue of honest seamen, entrusted with our property) in the prosecution of the war, and in the treatment of the prisoners, so deep an impression of her depravity, that we never again can trust her in the management of our affairs and interests. It is now impossible to persuade our people, as I long endeavored, that the war was merely ministerial, and that the nation bore still a good will to us. The infinite number of addresses printed in your Gazettes, all approving the conduct of your government towards us, and encouraging our destruction by every possible means, the great majority in parliament constantly manifesting the same sentiments, and the popular public rejoicings on occasion of any news of the slaughter of an innocent and virtuous people fighting only in defence of their just rights; these together with the recommendations of the same measures by even your celebrated moralists and divines, in their writings and sermons, that are still approved and applauded in your great national assemblies, all join in convincing us that you are no longer the magnanimous enlightened nation we once esteemed you; and that you are unfit and unworthy to govern us, as not being able to govern your own passions.

But, as I have said, I should be nevertheless happy in seeing peace restored. For though if my friends and the friends of liberty and virtue, who still remain in England, could be drawn out of it, a continuance of this war to the ruin of the rest, would give me less concern. I cannot, as that removal is impossible, but wish for peace for their sakes, as well as for the sake of humanity, and preventing further carnage.

This wish of mine, ineffective as it may be, induces me to mention to you, that between nations long exasperated against each other in war, some act of generosity and kindness towards prisoners on one side has softened resentment, and abated animosity on the other, so as to bring on an accommodation. You in England, if you wish for peace, have at pre-

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sent the opportunity of trying this means, with regard to the prisoners now in your gaols. They complain of very severe treatment. They are far from their friends and families, and winter is coming on, in which they must suffer extremely, if continued in their present situation; fed scantily, on bad provisions, without warm lodging, clothes, or fire, and not suffered to invite or receive visits from their friends, or even from the humane and charitable of their enemies. I can assure you, from my own certain knowledge, that your people, prisoners in America, have been treated with great kindness; they have been served with the same rations of wholesome provisions with our own troops, comfortable lodgings have been provided for them, and they have been allowed large bounds of villages in the healthy air, to walk and amuse themselves with on their parole. Where you have thought fit to employ contractors to supply your people, these contractors, have been protected and aided in their operations. Some considerable act of kindness towards our people would take off the reproach of inhumanity, in that respect from the nation, and leave it where it ought with more certainty to lay, on the conductors of your war in America. This I hint to you, out of some remaining good will to a nation I once loved sincerely. But as things are, and in my present temper of mind, not being overfond of receiving obligations, I shall content myself with proposing, that your government would allow us to send or employ a commissary to take some care of those unfortunate people. Perhaps on your representations this might speedily be obtained in England, though it was refused most inhumanly at New York.

If you could have leisure to visit the gaols in which they are confined, and should be desirous of knowing the truth, relative to the treatment they receive, I wish you would take the trouble of distributing among the most necessitous, according to their wants, five or six hundred pounds, for which your drafts on me here shall be punctually honored. You could then be able to speak with some certainty to the point in parliament, and this might be attended with good effects.

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If you cannot obtain for us permission to send a commissary, possibly you may find a trusty, humane, discreet person at Plymouth, and another at Portsmouth, who would undertake to communicate what relief we may be able to afford those unfortunate men, martyrs to the cause of liberty. Your king will not reward you for taking this trouble, but God will. I shall not mention the gratitude of America: you will have what is better, the applause of your own good conscience. Our captains have set at liberty above two hundred of your people, made prisoners by our armed vessels and brought into France, besides a great number dismissed at sea on your coasts, to whom vessels were given to carry them in. But you have not returned us a man in exchange. If we had sold your people to the moors at Sallee, as you have many of ours to the African and East India companies, could you have complained?

In revising what I have written, I found too much warmth in it, and was about to strike out some parts. Yet I let them go, as they will afford you this one reflection: "If a man naturally cool, and rendered still cooler by old age, is so warmed by our treatment of his country, how much must those people in general be exasperated against us! and why are we making inveterate enemies by our barbarity, not only of the present inhabitants of a great country, but of their infinitely more numerous posterity; who will in future ages detest the name of *Englishman*, as much as the children in Holland now do those of *Alva* and *Spaniard*." This will certainly happen, unless your conduct is speedily changed, and the national resentment falls, where it ought to fall heavily, on your ministry, or perhaps rather on the king, whose will they only execute.

With the greatest esteem and affection, and best wishes for your prosperity, I have the honor to be, dear sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Mr. Hutton.[f]

Passy, Feb. 1, 1778.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

YOU desired that if I had no proposition to make, I would at least give my advice.

I think it is Ariosto who says, that all things lost on earth, are to be found in the moon; on which somebody remarked, that there must be a great deal of good advice in the moon. If so there is a good deal of mine formerly given and lost in this business. I will however at your request give a little more, but without the least expectation that it will be followed; for none but God can at the same time give good counsel, and wisdom to make use of it.

You have lost by this mad war, and the barbarity with which it has been carried on, not only the government and commerce of America, and the public revenues and private wealth arising from that commerce, but what is more, you have lost the esteem, respect, friendship, and affection of all that great and growing people, who consider you at present, and whose posterity will consider you, as the worst and wickedest nation upon earth. A peace you may undoubtedly obtain, by dropping all your pretensions to govern us: and by your superior skill in huckstering negotiation, you may possibly make such an apparently advantageous bargain as shall be applauded in your parliament; but you cannot, with the peace, recover the affections of that people, it will not be a lasting nor a profitable one, nor will it afford you any part of that strength which you once had by your union with them, and might (if you had been wise enough to take advice) have still retained.

To recover their respect and affection, you must tread back the steps you have taken.

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[f] See an account of this gentleman, page 110 of this volume.

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Instead of honoring and rewarding the American advisers and promoters of this war, you should disgrace them; with all those who have inflamed the nation against America by their malicious writings; and all the ministers and generals who have prosecuted the war with such inhumanity. This would show a national change of disposition, and a disapprobation of what had passed.

In proposing terms, you should not only grant such as the necessity of your affairs may evidently oblige you to grant, but such additional ones as may show your generosity, and thereby demonstrate your good will. For instance, perhaps you might, by your treaty, retain all Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas. But if you would have a real friendly as well as able ally in America, and avoid all occasion of future discord, which will otherwise be continually arising on your American frontiers, you should throw in those countries. And you may call it if you please an indemnification for the burning of their towns, which indemnification will otherwise be some time or other demanded.

I know your people will not see the utility of such measures, and will never follow them, and even call it insolence and impudence in me to mention them. I have however complied with your desire, and am as ever your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Hutton.

Passy, Feb. 12, 1778.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I WROTE the above some time before I received yours, acquainting me with your speedy and safe return, which gave me pleasure. I doubted after I had written it whether it would be well to send it; for as your proud nation despises us exceedingly, and demands and expects absolute and humble submission, all talk of treaty must appear imprudence, and tend to provoke rather than conciliate. As you still press me by your last to say something, I conclude to send what I had

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written, for I think the advice is good, though it must be useless; and I cannot, as some amongst you desire, make propositions, having none committed to me to make; but we can treat if any are made to us; which however we do not expect. I abominate with you all murder, and I may add, that the slaughter of men in an unjust cause is nothing less than murder; I therefore never think of your present ministers and their abettors, but with the image strongly painted in my view, of their hands, red, wet, and dropping with the blood of my countrymen, friends, and relations. No peace can be signed by those hands.

Peace and friendship will nevertheless subsist for ever between Mr. Hutton and his affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

To D. Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, Feb. 12, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

A THOUSAND thanks for your so readily engaging in the means of relieving our poor captives, and the pains you have taken, and the advances you have made for that purpose. I received your kind letter of the 3d instant, and send you inclosed a bill of one hundred pounds. I much approve of Mr. Wren's prudent, as well as benevolent conduct, in the disposition of the money, and wish him to continue doing what shall appear to him and to you to be right, which I am persuaded will appear the same to me and my colleagues here. I beg you will present him, when you write, my respectful acknowlegments.

Your "earnest caution and request that nothing may ever persuade America to throw themselves into the arms of France; for that times may mend, and that an American must always be a stranger in France, but that Great Britain may for ages to come be their home," marks the goodness of your heart, your regard for us, and love of your country. But when your nation is hiring all the cut-throats it can collect,

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of all conntries and colours to destroy us, it is hard to persuade us not to ask or accept aid from any power that may be prevailed with to grant it; and this only from the hope, that though you now thirst for our blood, and pursue us with fire and sword, you may in some future time treat us kindly. This is too much patience to be expected of us; indeed I think it is not in human nature. The Americans are received and treated here in France with a cordiality, a respect, and affection they never experienced in England when they most deserved it; and which is now (after all the pains taken to exasperate the English against them, and render them odious as well as contemptible) less to be expected there than ever. And I cannot see why we may not, upon an alliance, hope for a continuance of it, at least as much as the Swiss enjoy, with whom France have maintained a faithful friendship for two hundred years past, and whose people appear to live here in as much esteem as the natives. America has been *forced* and *driven* into the arms of France. She was a dutiful and virtuous daughter. A cruel mother-in-law turned her out of doors, defamed her, and sought her life. All the world knows her innocence and takes her part; and her friends hope soon to see her honorably married. They can never persuade her return and submission to so barbarous an enemy. In her future prosperity, if she forgets and forgives, 'tis all that can be reasonably expected of her. I believe she will make as good and useful a wife as she did a daughter, that her husband will love and honor her, and that the family from which she was so wickedly expelled, will long regret the loss of her.

I know not whether a peace with us is desired in England, I rather think it is not at present, unless on the old impossible terms of submission and receiving pardon. Whenever you shall be disposed to make peace upon equal and reasonable terms, you will find little difficulty if you get first an honest ministry. The present have all along acted so deceitfully and treacherously, as well as inhumanly towards the Americans, that I imagine, that the absolute want of all confidence in

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them, will make a treaty at present, between them and the congress, impracticable.

The subscription for the prisoners will have excellent effects in favor of England and Englishmen. The Scotch subscriptions for raising troops to destroy us, though amounting to much greater sums, will not do their nation half so much good. If you have an opportunity, I wish you would express our respectful acknowlegments and thanks to your committee and contributors, whose benefactions will make our poor people as comfortable as their situation can permit. Adieu, my dear friend. Accept my thanks for the excellent papers you inclosed to me. Your endeavors for peace, though unsuccessful, will always be a comfort to you, and in time, when this mad war shall be universally execrated, will be a solid addition to your reputation.

I am ever with the highest esteem, &c.

PS. An old friend of mine, Mr. Hutton, a chief of the Moravians, who is often at the queen's palace, and is sometimes spoken to by the king, was over here lately. He pretended to no commision, but urged me much to propose some terms of peace, which I avoided. He has wrote to me since his return, pressing the same thing, and expressing with some confidence his opinion that we might have every thing short of absolute independence, &c. Inclosed I send my answers; open that you may read them, and if you please copy before you deliver or forward them. They will serve to show you more fully my sentiments, though they serve no other purpose.

To the same.

Passy, Feb. 26, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED yours of the 18th and 20th of this month, with lord North's proposed bills. The more I see of the ideas and projects of your ministry, and their little arts and schemes of amusing and dividing us, the more I admire the prudent, manly, and magnanimous propositions contained in

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your intended motion for an address to the king. What reliance can we have on an act expressing itself to be only a declaration of the *intention* of parliament concerning the *exercise* of the right of imposing taxes in America, when in the bill itself, as well as in the title, a right is supposed and claimed which never existed; and a *present intention* only is declared not to use it, which may be changed by another act next sessions, with a preamble that this *intention* being found expedient, it is thought proper to repeal this act, and resume the exercise of *the right* in its full extent. If any solid permanent benefit was intended by this, why is it confined to the colonies of North America, and not extended to the loyal ones in the sugar islands? But it is now endless to criticise, as all acts that suppose your future government of the colonies can be no longer significant.

In the act for appointing commissioners, instead of full powers to agree upon terms of peace and friendship, with a promise of ratifying such treaty as they shall make in pursuance of those powers; it is declared that their agreements shall have no force nor effect, nor be carried into execution till approved of by parliament; so that every thing of importance will be uncertain. But they are allowed to proclaim a cessation of arms, and revoke their proclamation as soon as in consequence of it, our militia have been allowed to go home: they may suspend the operation of acts, prohibiting trade, and take off that suspension when our merchants, in consequence of it, have been induced to send their ships to sea; in short, they may do every thing that can have a tendency to divide and distract us, but nothing that can afford us security. Indeed, sir, your ministers do not know us. We may not be quite so cunning as they, but we have really more sense, as well as more courage than they have ever been willing to give us credit for; and I am persuaded these acts will rather obstruct peace than promote it, and that they will not answer in America the mischievous and malevolent ends for which they were intended. In England they may indeed amuse the public creditors, give hopes and expectations that shall be of

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some present use, and continue the mis-managers a little longer in their places. *Voila tout!*

In return for your repeated advice to us, not to conclude any treaty with the house of Bourbon, permit me to give (through you) a little advice to the Whigs in England. Let nothing induce them to join with the Tories in supporting and continuing this wicked war against the Whigs of America, whose assistance they may hereafter want to secure their own liberties; or whose country they may be glad to retire to for the enjoyment of them.

If peace, by a treaty with America upon equal terms, were really desired, your commissioners need not go there for it; supposing, as by the bill they are empowered "to treat with such person or persons as in their wisdom and discretion they shall think meet," they should happen to conceive that the commissioners of the congress at Paris might be included in that description.

I am ever, dear sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

PS. Seriously on farther thoughts, I am of opinion, that if wise and honest men, such as sir George Saville, the bishop of St. Asaph, and yourself, were to come over here immediately with powers to treat, you might not only obtain peace with America but prevent a war with France.

To Mr. Hutton.

Passy, March 24, 1778.

MY dear old friend was in the right not "to call in question the sincerity of my words, where I say, February 12, *we can treat if any propositions are made to us.*" They were true then, and are so still, if Britain has not declared war with France; for in that case we shall undoubtedly think ourselves obliged to continue the war as long as she does. But methinks you should have taken us at our word, and have sent immediately your propositions in order to prevent such a war, if you did not chuse it. Still I conceive it would

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be well to do it, if you have not already rashly begun the war. Assure yourself nobody more sincerely wishes perpetual peace among men than I do; but there is a prior wish, that they would be equitable and just, otherwise such peace is not possible, and indeed wicked men have no right to expect it.

Adieu! I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

Note from William Pultney, Esq., M. P.

MR. WILLIAMS returned this morning to Paris, and will be glad to see Dr. Franklin, whenever it is convenient for the doctor, at the *Hotel Frasiliere, Rue Tournon.* It is near the hotel where he lodged when the doctor saw him a fortnight ago. He does not propose to go abroad, and therefore the doctor will find him at any hour. He understands that Mr. Alexander is not yet returned from Dijon, which he regrets.

Sunday Morning, March 29, 1788.

[The following letter to Mr. Pultney, was not sent, but contains what was said in a conversation Dr. Franklin had with him in Paris.]

To William Pultney, Esq.

Passy, March 30, 1778.

SIR,

WHEN I first had the honor of conversing with you on the subject of peace, I mentioned it as my opinion that every proposition which implied our voluntarily agreeing to return to a dependence on Britain, was now become impossible, that a peace on equal terms undoubtedly might be made; and that though we had no particular powers to treat of peace with England, we had general powers to make treaties of peace, amity, and commerce, with any state in Europe, by which I thought we might be authorised to treat with Britain; who, if sincerely disposed to peace, might save time and much bloodshed by treating with us directly.

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I also gave it as my opinion, that in the treaty to be made, Britain should endeavor, by the fairness and generosity of the terms she offered, to recover the esteem, confidence, and affection of America, without which the peace could not be so beneficial, as it was not likely to be lasting: in this I had the pleasure to find you of my opinion.

But I see by the propositions you have communicated to me, that the ministers cannot yet divest themselves of the idea, that the power of parliament over us is constitutionally absolute and unlimited; and that the limitations they may be willing now to put to it by treaty, are so many favors, or so many benefits, for which we are to make compensation.

As our opinions in America are totally different, a treaty on the terms proposed appears to me utterly impracticable, either here or there. Here we certainly cannot make it, having not the smallest authority to make even the declaration specified in the proposed letter, without which, if I understood you right, treating with us cannot be commenced.

I sincerely wish as much for peace as you do, and I have enough remaining of good will for England to wish it for her sake as well as for our own, and for the sake of humanity. In the present state of things, the proper means of obtaining it, in my opinion, are to acknowlege the independence of the United States, and then enter at once into a treaty with us for a suspension of arms, with the usual provisions relating to distances; and another for establishing peace, friendship, and commerce, such as France has made. This might prevent a war between you and that kingdom, which in the present circumstances and temper of the two nations an accident may bring on every day, though contrary to the interest and without the previous intention of either. Such a treaty we might probably now make, with the approbation of our friends; but if you go to war with them, on account of their friendship for us, we are bound by ties, stronger than can be formed by any treaty, to fight against you with them, as long as the war against them shall continue.

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May God at last grant that wisdom to your national councils which he seems long to have denied them, and which only sincere, just, and humane intentions can merit or expect.

With great personal esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

From Mr. Alexander, to Dr. Franklin.

MY DEAR SIR,

UPON a night's reflection, it is thought right that you be possessed of the inclosed,[g] to be afterwards returned without taking copy, in case no business be done. Will you let me know by the bearer, if we are to see you in town to day, and when, that I may be at hand?

Saturday Morning, April 4, 1778.

To Dr. Bancroft,[h] F. R. S. London.

Passy, April 16, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I WISH you would assure our friend, that Dr. Franklin never gave any such expectations to Mr. Pultney. On the contrary, he told him that the commissioners could not succeed in their mission, whether they went to recover the *dependance* or to *divide*. His opinion is confirmed by the inclosed resolves, which perhaps it may not be amiss to publish in England. Please to send me the newspaper.

Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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[g] Some proposals on the part of the British ministry, disapproved of by Dr. Franklin, and returned.

[h] An American gentleman of great worth and abilities; an intimate and much respected friend of Dr. Franklin's, to whom the United States ear greatly indebted for his exertions and assistance in the cause of their Independence.

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His Excellency Joseph Reed, Esq.

President of the State of Pennsylvania.

Passy, March 19, 1780.

SIR,

I HAVE just received the pamphlet you did me the honor to send me by M. Gerard, and have read it with pleasure; not only as the clear state of facts, it does you honor, but as it proves the falsehood of a man,[1] who also showed no regard to truth in what he said of me, "*that I approved of the propositions he carried over.*" The truth is this, his brother, Mr. Pultney, came here with those propositions; and after stipulating, that if I did not approve of them, I should not speak of them to any person, he communicated them to me. I told him frankly, on his desiring to know my sentiments, that I DID NOT *approve of them, and that I was sure they* WOULD NOT *be accepted in America.* But, I said there are two other commissioners here. I will, if you please, show your propositions to them, and you will hear their opinions. I will also show them to the ministry here, without whose knowlege and concurrence we can take no step in such affairs. No, said he; as you do not approve of them, it can answer no purpose to show them to any body else: the reasons that weigh with you will also weigh with them: therefore I now pray that no mention may be made of my having been here, or my business. To this I agreed, and therefore nothing could be more astonishing to me, than to see in an American newspaper, that direct lie, in a letter from Mr. Johnstone, joined with two other falsehoods, relating to the time of the treaty, and to the opinion of Spain!

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[1] The person here referred to is best known in history, under the title of commodore Johnstone: he it was who offered temptations to several distinguished Americans, when he was joined in a commission with lord Carlisle and sir William Eden. It was when acting as commissioner he made those false allegations also.

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In proof of the above, I inclose a certificate of a friend of Mr. Pultney's, the only person present at our interview; and I do it the rather at this time, because I am informed that another calumniator (the same who formerly in his private letters to particular members, accused you with Messrs Jay, Duane, Langdon, and Harrison, of betraying the secrets of congress in a correspondence with the ministry) has made this transaction with Mr. Pultney, an article of accusation against me, as having approved the same propositions. He proposes, I understand, to settle in your government. I caution you to beware of him; for in sowing suspicions and jealousies, in creating misunderstandings and quarrels among friends, in malice, subtility, and indefatigable industry, he has, I think, no equal.[k]

I am glad to see that you continue to preside in our new state, as it shows that your public conduct is approved by the people. You have had a difficult time, which required abundance of prudence; and you have been equal to the occasion. The disputes about the constitution seem to have subsided. It is much admired here and all over Europe, and will draw over many families of fortune, to settle under it as soon as there is a peace. The defects that may on seven years' trial be found in it, can be amended, when the time comes for considering them.

With great and sincere esteem and respect I have the honor to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

CERTIFICATE.

I do hereby certify, whom it may concern, that I was with Mr. Pultney and Dr. Franklin at Paris, when in a conversation between them, on the subject of certain propositions, for a reconciliation with America, offered by Mr. Pultney: Dr. Franklin said he did not approve of them, nor did he think they would be approved in America, but that he would com-

[k] Who this execrable character is, cannot be discovered from the text.

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mmicate them to his colleagues and the French ministry. This Mr. Pultney opposed, saying that it would answer no good end, as he was persuaded that what weighed with Dr. Franklin would weigh also with them; and therefore desired that no mention might be made of his having offered such propositions, or even of his having been here, on such business; but that the whole might be buried in oblivion, agreeable to what had been stipulated by Mr. Pultney, and agreed to by Dr. Franklin, before the propositions were produced, which Dr. Franklin accordingly promised.

Paris, March 19, 1780.

(Signed) Wm. ALEXANDER.

DEAR SIR,

I SEND you adjoined, the certificate you desire; and am perfectly convinced, from conversations I have since had with Mr. Pultney, that nobody was authorised to hold the language which has been imputed to him on that subject; and as I have a high opinion of his candor and worth, I know it must be painful to him to be brought into question in matters of fact with persons he esteems. I could wish that this matter may receive no farther publicity than what is necessary for your justification.

I am, &c.

W. ALEXANDER.

To Dr. Franklin, Passy.

To Count de Vergennes,

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Versailles.

Passy, April 24, 1778.

SIR,

MR. HARTLEY, a member of parliament, an old acquaintance of mine, arrived here from London on Sunday last. He is generally in the opposition, especially on American questions, but has some respect for lord North. In con-

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versation he expressed the strongest anxiety for peace with America, and appeared extremely desirous to know my sentiments of the terms which might probably be acceptable if offered; whether America would not to obtain peace, grant some superior advantages in trade to Britain, and enter into an alliance offensive and defensive; whether if war should be declared against France, we had obliged ourselves by treaty, to join with her against England. My answers have been, that the United States were not fond of war, and with the advice of their friends, would probably be easily prevailed with to make peace on equitable terms; but we had no terms committed to us to propose, and I did not chuse to mention any: that Britain having injured us heavily by making this unjust war upon us, might think herself well off, if *on reparation of those injuries*, we admitted her to *equal* advantages with other nations in commerce; but certainly she had no reason to expect *superior:* that her known fondness for war, and the many instances of her readiness to engage in wars on frivolous occasions, were probably sufficient to cause an immediate rejection of every proposition for an *offensive* alliance with her: and that if she made war against France on our account, a peace with us, at the same time, was impossible; for that having met with friendship from that generous nation, when we were cruelly oppressed by England, we were under ties, stronger than treaties could form, to make common cause; which we should certainly do to the utmost of our power. Here has also been with me a Mr. Chapman, who says he is a member of the parliament of Ireland, on his way home from Nice, where he had been for the recovery of his health. He pretended to call on me only from motives of respect for my character, &c. But after a few compliments, he entered on a similar discourse, urging much to know what terms would satisfy America, and whether, on having *peace and independence granted* to us, we should not be willing to submit to the navigation act, or give equivalent privileges in trade to Britain. The purport of my answer to him was in short, that *peace* was of *equal* value to England as to us, and in-

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dependence we were already in possession of: that therefore England's offer to grant them to us could not be considered as proposing any favor, or as giving her a right to expect peculiar advantages in commerce. By his importunity I found his visit was not so occasional as he represented it: and from some expressions I conjectured he might be sent by lord Shelburne to sound me, and collect some information. On the whole, I gather from these conversations, that the opposition as well as the ministry are perplexed with the present situation of affairs, and know not which way to turn themselves, whether it is best to go backward or forward, or what steps to take to extricate that nation from its present dangerous situation

I thought it right to give your excellency an account of these interviews, and to acquaint you with my intention of avoiding such hereafter, as I see but little prospect of utility in them, and think they are very liable to hurtful misrepresentations.

By advices from London we learn, that a fleet for Quebec, with goods valued at five hundred thousand pounds sterling, is to sail about the end of this month, under convoy only of a single frigate of thirty guns, in which is to go governor Haldimand.

Inclosed I send a paper I have just received from London. It is not subscribed by any name, but I know the hand. It is from an old friend of general and great acquaintance, and marks strongly the present distress and despair of considerate people in England.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, your excellency's, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

From Count de Vergennes, to Dr. Franklin.

A Versailles, le April 25, 1778.

J'AI rendu compte au roi, monsieur, du contenû de la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'ecrire hier, et sa majesté me charge de vous temoigner toute sa satisfaction de

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votre empressement à nous informer de l'objet de vos conferences avec M. Hartley. Le grand art de l'Angleterre fut toujours de chercher à diviser, c'est un bon moyen en effet pour s'assurer l'empire; mais ce n'est ni auprès de vous ni auprés de vos collegues qu'il peut etre employé avec succès; je porte avec confiance le meme jugement des etats unis. Au reste il n'est pas possible, monsieur, de repondre avec plus de noblesse, de franchise et de fermeté que vous l'avez fait a M. Hartley: il n'a pas lieu d'etre content de sa mission. J'ignore si ce membre du parlement en a une pour nous; il desire de me voir, et je l'attens dans la matinée. Je ne serois pas surpris qu'il ne se proposat de semer la defiance entre nous en introduisant une double negociation, mais je saurai y obvier, et vous serez instruit de ce qui se passera entre nous pour peu qu'il y ait quelque chose d'interessant.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec une tres parfaite consideration, monsieur, votre tres humble et tres obeissant serviteur,

DE VERGENNES.

TRANSLATION.

Versailles, 25th April, 1778.

I HAVE made known to the king, sir, the substance of the letter which you did me the honor of writing to me yesterday; and I am directed, by his majesty, to express to you the satisfaction he has experienced from the information which you have communicated on your conferences with Mr. Hartley. The grand principle of the English policy has always been to excite divisions; and it is by such means she expects to sustain her empire; but it is not upon you, nor upon your colleagues, that she can practise such arts with success: I entertain the same sentiments of confidence in the United States: of the rest it is impossible to speak with more dignity, frankness, and firmness, than you have done to Mr. Hartley: he has no reason to be very well satisfied with his mission. I doubt whether the member of parliament has any mission for us: but he desires to see me, and I expect him in the course of the morning. I should not be at all surprised if his purpose be to sow distrust between us, by proposing a double negotiation: that I can obviate; but whatever passes between us, however trifling it may be, you shall be made acquainted with.

I have the honor to be, with the most perfect consideration, sir, your most humble and most obedient servant, DE VERGENNES.

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To Dr. Franklin, Passy.

Paris, April 28, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I WILL take care of all your commissions. This moment a second packet of infinite value is received, which I shall cherish as a mark of affection from you. I opened the letter by mistake which came with it, and soon saw it was not for me. I hope you will excuse it. I chuse rather to throw myself upon your goodness for the excuse, than any thing else. I shall not set out till between one and two; therefore, if you will be so good as to send me another copy, I will take care of it and deliver it safely.

God bless you, my dear friend. No exertion or endeavor on my part shall be wanting, that we may some time or other meet again in peace. Your powers are infinitely more influential than mine. To those powers I trust my last hopes. I will conclude, blessed are the peace-makers.

Your affectionate friend,

D. HARTLEY.

If tempestuous times should come, take care of your own safety: events are uncertain, and men may be capricious.

Yours, &c.

Answer.

I THANK you for your kind caution, but having nearly finished a long life, I set but little value on what remains of it. Like a draper, when one chaffers with him for a remnant, I am ready to say, "As it is only the fag-end, I will not differ with you about it; take it for what you please." Perhaps the best use such an old fellow can be put to, is to make a martyr of him.

B. FRANKLIN.

An anonymous letter delivered to me at nine in the evening, May 20, '78. It seems intended to draw me out into

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those gardens for some bad purpose; as the person who pretended to have such urgent business with me has never since appeared; though (refusing to go out at that time of night) I appointed the next day at eleven o'clock.

B. FRANKLIN.

ANONYMOUS NOTE,
Received by Dr. Franklin.

20th May, 1778.

UNE personne qui aurois quelque chose de tres interessant et pressé a vous communiquer, desirerois, monsieur, que vous voulussiez bien luy donner un moment pour luy procurer l'agrément de s'entretenir avec vous sur le dont il sagit.

L'on sais que vouz venéz quelquefois au jardin des eaux, et comme l'on ne veut l'être apperçu d'aucun de vos gens (et que l'on a des raisons très fortes pour cela), l'on sont transporté icy tout exposé de Paris dans l'espoir que l'on aura l'avantage de vous voire et de vous parler d'objet d'autan plus important qu'il concerne des personnes distingués.

TRANSLATION.

A PERSON who has some matters of a most interesting nature to communicate, is desirous, sir, that you would condescend to afford him a moment to converse with you on affairs which are now in agitation.

It is known that you sometimes visit the garden of the Fountains; and as the person who addresses you is desirous not to be perceived by any of your domestics (and for this there are the strongest reasons) he has removed from Paris to this place, with the hope of having the advantage of seeing and speaking with you, on a subject which is the more important, because it concerns some distinguished persons.

Answer to a Letter from Brussels.

Passy, July 1, 1778.

SIR,

I RECEIVED your letter dated at Brussels the 16th past.

My vanity might possibly be flattered by your expressions of compliment to my understanding, if your proposals did not more clearly manifest a mean opinion of it.

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You conjure me in the name of the omniscient and just God, before whom I must appear, and by my hopes of future fame, to consider if some expedient cannot be found to put a stop to the desolation of America, and prevent the miseries of a general war. As I am conscious of having taken every step in my power to prevent the breach, and no one to widen it; I can appear cheerfully before that God, fearing nothing from his justice in this particular, though I have much occasion for his mercy in many others. As to my future fame, I am content to rest it on my past and present conduct, without seeking an addition to it in the crooked, dark paths, you propose to me, where I should most certainly lose it. This your solemn address would therefore have been more properly made to your sovereign and his venal parliament. He and they, who wickedly began and madly continue a war, for the desolation of America, are alone accountable for the consequences.

You endeavor to impress me with a bad opinion of French faith; but the instances of their friendly endeavors to serve a race of weak princes, who by their own imprudence defeated every attempt to promote their interest, weigh but little with me, when I consider the steady friendship of France to the thirteen United States of Switzerland, which has now continued inviolate two hundred years. You tell me that she will certainly cheat us, and that she despises us already. I do not believe that she will cheat us, and I am not certain that she despises us: but I see clearly that you are endeavoring to cheat us by your conciliatory bills; that you actually despised our understandings when you flattered yourselves those artifices would succeed; and that not only France but all Europe, yourselves included, most certainly, and for ever would despise us if we were weak enough to accept your insidious propositions.

Our expectations of the future grandeur of America, are not so magnificent, and therefore not so vain or visionary as you represent them to be. The body of our people are not merchants, but humble husbandmen, who delight in the cul-

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tivation of their lands, which from their fertility and the variety of our climates, are capable of furnishing all the necessaries and conveniences of life without external commerce: and we have too much land, to have the least temptation to extend our territory by conquest from peaceable neighbours, as well as too much justice to think of it. Our militia you find by experience are sufficient to defend our lands from invasion; and the commerce with us will be defended by all the nations who find an advantage in it. We therefore have not the occasion you imagine, of fleets, or standing armies, but may leave those expensive machines to be maintained for the pomp of princes, and the wealth of ancient states. We propose, if possible, to live in peace with all mankind; and after you have been convinced, to your cost that there is nothing to be got by attacking us, we have reason to hope that no other power will judge it prudent to quarrel with us, lest they divert us from our own quiet industry, and turn us into corsairs preying upon theirs. The weight therefore of an independent empire, which you seem certain of our inability to bear, will not be so great as you imagine. The expense of our civil government we have always borne, and can easily bear, because it is small. A virtuous and laborious people may be cheaply governed. Determining as we do to have no offices of profit, nor any sinecures or useless appointments, so common in ancient and corrupted states, we can govern ourselves a year, for the sum you pay in a single department, or for what one jobbing contractor, by the favor of a minister, can cheat you out of in a single article.

You think we flatter ourselves, and are deceived into an opinion that England *must* acknowlege our independency. We on the other hand think you flatter yourselves in imagining such an acknowlegment a vast boon which we strongly desire, and which you may gain some great advantage by granting or withholding. We have never asked it of you. We only tell you, that you can have no treaty with us but as an independent state; and you may please yourselves and your children with the rattle of your right to govern us, as

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long as you have done with that of your king's being king of France, without giving us the least concern, if you do not attempt to exercise it. That this pretended right is indisputable, as you say, we utterly deny. Your parliament never had a right to govern us, and your king has forfeited it by his bloody tyranny. But I thank you for letting me know a little of your mind, that even if the parliament should acknowlege our independency, the act would not be binding to posterity, and that your nation would resume and prosecute the claim as soon as they found it convenient from the influence of your passions, and your present malice against us. We suspected before, that you would not be actually bound by your conciliatory acts, longer than the they had served their purpose of inducing us to disband our forces; but we were not certain that you were knaves by principle, and that we ought not to have the least confidence in your offers, promises, or treaties, though confirmed by parliament. I now indeed recollect my being informed, long since, when in England, that a certain very great personage, then young, studied much a certain book, entitled *Arcana imperii.* I had the curiosity to procure the book and read it. There are sensible and good things in it, but some bad ones; for if I remember right, a particular king is applauded for his politically exciting a rebellion among his subjects, at a time when they had not strength to support it, that he might, in subduing them, take away their privileges which were troublesome to him: and a question is formally stated and discussed, *Whether a prince, to appease a revolt, makes promises of indemnity to the revolters, is obliged to fulfil those promises?* Honest and good men would say, aye: but this politician says as you say, no. And he gives this pretty reason, that though it was right to make the promises, because otherwise the revolt would not be suppressed; yet it would be wrong to keep them, because revolters ought to be punished to deter future revolts. If these are the principles of your nation, no confidence can be placed in you, it is in vain to treat with you, and the wars can only end in being reduced to an utter inability of continuing them.

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One main drift of your letter seems to be to impress me with an idea of your own impartiality, by just censures of your ministers and measures, and to draw from me propositions of peace, or approbations of those you have inclosed me, which you intimate may by your means be conveyed to the king directly, without the intervention of those ministers. Would you have me give them to, or drop them for a stranger I may find next Monday in the church of Notre Dame, to be known by a rose in his hat? You yourself, sir, are quite unknown to me, you have not trusted me with your true name. Our taking the least step towards a treaty with England, through you, might, if you are an enemy, be made use of to ruin us with our new and good friends. I may be indiscreet enough in many things; but certainly, if I were disposed to make propositions (which I cannot do, having none committed to me to make) I should never think of delivering them to the Lord knows who, to be carried to the Lord knows where; to serve no one knows what purposes. Being at this time one of the most remarkable figures in Paris, even my appearance in the church of Notre Dame, where I cannot have any conceivable business, and especially being seen to leave or drop any letter to any person there, would be a matter of some speculation, and might, from the suspicions it must naturally give, have very mischievous consequences to our credit here. The very proposing of a correspondence so to be managed, in a manner not necessary where *fair dealing* is intended, gives just reason to suppose you intend *the contrary*. Besides, as your court has sent commissioners to treat with the congress, with all the powers that would be given them by the crown under the act of parliament, what *good purpose* can be served by privately obtaining propositions from us? Before those commissioners went, we might have treated in virtue of our general powers, (with the knowlege, advice, and approbation of our friends) upon any propositions made to us. But under the present circumstances for us to make propositions, while a treaty is supposed to be actually on foot with the congress, would be ex-

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tremely improper, highly presumptuous, with regard to our honorable constituents, and answer no good end whatever.

I write this letter to you, notwithstanding (which I think I can convey in a less mysterious manner; and guess it may come to your hands;) I write it because I would let you know our sense of your procedure, which appears as insidious as that of your conciliatory bills. Your true way to obtain peace, if your ministers desire it, is to propose openly to the congress fair and equal terms; and you may possibly come sooner to such a resolution, when you find that personal flatteries, general cajolings, and panegyrics on our *virtue* and *wisdom* are not likely to have the effect you seem to expect; the persuading us to act *basely* and *foolishly* in betraying our country and posterity into the hands of our most bitter enemies; giving up or selling of our arms, and warlike stores, dismissing our ships of war and troops, and putting those enemies in possession of our forts and ports. This proposition of delivering ourselves bound and gagged, ready for hanging, without even a right to complain, and without a friend to be found afterwards among all mankind, you would have us embrace upon the faith of an act of parliament! Good God! an act of your parliament! This demonstrates that you do not yet know us, and that you fancy we do not know you: but it is not merely this flimsy faith that we are to act upon; you offer us *hope*, the hope of PLACES, PENSIONS, and PEERAGE. These, judging from yourselves, you think are motives irresistible. This offer to corrupt us, sir, is with me, your credential, and convinces me, that you are not a private volunteer in your application. It bears the stamp of British court intrigue, and the signature of your king. But think for a moment in what light it must be viewed in America. By PLACES which cannot come among us, for you take care by a special article to keep them to yourselves. We must then pay the salaries in order to enrich ourselves with these places. But you will give us PENSIONS; probably to be paid too out of your expected American revenue; and which none of us can accept without deserving and perhaps obtaining a *suspension*.

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PEERAGES! alas! sir, our long observation of the vast servile majority of your peers, voting constantly for every measure proposed by a minister, however weak or wicked, leaves us small respect for them, and we consider it as a sort of tar-and-feathered honor, or a mixture of foulness and folly; which every man among us, who should accept from your king, would be obliged to renounce or exchange, for that conferred by the mobs of their own country, or wear it with everlasting shame.

I am, sir, your humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

[*Letter in answer to the propositions of quitting the alliance with France. Supposed to be to David Hartley, Esq.*]

Passy, Feb. 3, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just received your favor of the 23d past, in which you mention, "that the alliance between France and America is the great stumbling-block, in the way of making peace;" and you go on to observe, that "whatever engagements America may have entered into, they may, at least by consent of parties, *be relinquished*, for the purpose of removing so material an obstacle to any general treaty of free and unengaged parties." Adding that "if the parties could meet for the sake of peace upon *free* and *open* ground, you should think *that* a very fair proposition to be offered to the people of England, and an equitable proposition in itself." The long, steady, and kind regard you have shewn for the welfare of America, by the whole tenor of your conduct in parliament, satisfies me, that this proposition never took its rise with you, but has been suggested from some other quarter; and that your excess of humanity, your love of peace, and your fear for us, that the destruction we are threatened with will certainly be effected, have thrown a mist before your eyes, which hindered you from seeing the malignity and mischief of it. We know that your king hates Whigs and Presbyterians; that he thirsts for our blood; of which has he already

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drunk large draughts; that weak and unprincipled ministers are ready to execute the wickedest of his orders, and his venal parliament equally ready to vote them just. Not the smallest appearance of a reason can be imagined, capable of inducing us to think of relinquishing a solid alliance with one of the most amiable as well as most powerful princes of Europe, for the expectation of unknown terms of peace, to be afterwards offered to us by *such a government:* a government that has already shamefully broken all the compacts it ever made with us. This is worse than advising us to drop the substance for the shadow. The dog after he found his mistake, might possibly have recovered his mutton; but we could never hope to be trusted again by France, or indeed by any other nation under heaven. Nor does there appear any more necessity for dissolving an alliance with France, before you can treat with us, than there would of dissolving your alliance with Holland, or your union with Scotland, before we could treat with you. Ours is therefore no *material obstacle* to a treaty, as you suppose it to be. Had lord North been the author of such a proposition, all the world would have said it was insidious, and meant only to deceive and divide us from our friends, and then to ruin us: supposing our fears might be strong to procure an acceptance of it. But, thanks to God, that is not the case! we have long since settled all the account in our own minds: we know the worst you can do to us, if you have your wish, is to confiscate our estates and take our lives, to rob and murder us; and this you have seen we are ready to hazard, rather than come again under your detested government.

You must observe, my dear friend, that I am a little warm. Excuse me! 'Tis over. Only let me counsel you, not to think of being sent hither on so fruitless an errand as that of making such a proposition.

It puts me in mind of the comic farce intitled, *God-send,* or *The Wreckers.* You may have forgotten it; but I will endeavor to amuse you by recollecting a little of it.

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Scene. *Mount's Bay.*

A ship riding at anchor in a great storm. A lee shore full of rocks, and lined with people, furnished with axes and carriages to cut up wrecks, knock the sailors on the head, and carry off the plunder; *according to custom.*

1*st Wrecker.* This ship rides it out longer than I expected: she must have good ground tackle.

2*d Wrecker.* We had better send off a boat to her, and persuade her to take a pilot, who can afterwards run her a-shore, where we can best come at her.

3*d Wrecker.* I doubt whether the boat can live in this sea: but if there are any brave fellows willing to hazard themselves for the good of the public, and a double share—let them say aye.

Several Wreckers. I, I, I, I.

The boat goes off, and comes under the ship's stern.

Spokesman. So ho, the Ship, ahoa!

Captain. Hulloa.

Sp. Would you have a pilot?

Capt. No, no!

Sp. It blows hard, and you are in danger.

Capt. I know it.

Sp. Will you buy a better cable? we have one in the boat here.

Capt. What do you ask for it?

Sp. Cut that you have, and then we 'll talk about the price of this.

Capt. I shall do no such foolish thing: I have lived in your parish formerly, and know the heads of ye too well to trust ye: keep off from my cable there: I see you have a mind to cut it yourselves: If you go any nearer to it, I 'll fire into you and sink you.

Sp. It is a damn'd rotten French cable, and will part of itself in half an hour. Where will you be then, captain? you had better take our offer.

Capt. You offer nothing, you rogues, but treachery and

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mischief. My cable is good and strong, and will hold long enough to baulk all your projects.

Sp. You talk unkindly, captain, to people who came here only for your good.

Capt. I know you came for all our *goods*, but, by God's help, you shall have none of them: you shall not serve us as you did the Indiamen.

Sp. Come, my lads, let 's be gone: This fellow is not so great a fool as we took him to be.

* * * * * * *.

To David Hartley, Esq.

Passy, Feb. 22, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your proposition for removing the stumbling-block. Your constant desires of peace ought to endear you to both sides; but this proposition seems to be naturally impracticable. We can never think of quitting a solid alliance, made and ratified, in order to be in a state for receiving unknown proposals of peace, which may vanish in the discussion. The truth is we have no kind of faith in your government, which appears to us as insidious and deceitful as it is unjust and cruel: its character is that of the *Spider* in *Thomson*,

> ——————— *cunning, and fierce,*
> *Mixture abhorr'd!*

Besides, we cannot see the necessity of our relinquishing our alliance with France in order to a treaty, any more than of your relinquishing yours with Holland.

I am, very affectionately, yours,

N. A.[1]

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[1] North America.

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To the same.

Passy, March 21, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED duly yours of the 2d instant. I am sorry you have had so much trouble in the affair of the prisoners. You have been deceived as well as me. No cartel ship has yet appeared; and it is now evident, that the delays have been of design, to give more opportunity of seducing the men by promises and hardships to seek their liberty in engaging against their country: for we learn from those who have escaped, that there are persons continually employed in cajoling and menacing them; representing to them that we neglect them; that your government is willing to exchange them; and that it is our fault it is not done: that all the news from America is bad on their side; we shall be conquered and they will be hanged, if they do not accept the gracious offer of being pardoned, on condition of serving the king, &c. A great part of your prisoners have been kept these six months on board a ship in Brest road, ready to be delivered; where I am afraid they were not so comfortably accommodated as they might have been in the French prisons. They are now ordered on shore. Doctor Bancroft has received your letter here. He did not go to Calais.

Knowing how earnestly and constantly you wish for peace, I cannot end a letter to you without dropping a word on that subject, to mark that my wishes are still in unison with yours. After the barbarities your nation has exercised against us, I am almost ashamed to own that I feel sometimes for her misfortunes and her insanities. Your veins are open, and your best blood continually running. You have now got a little army into Georgia, and are triumphing in that success. Do you expect ever to see that army again? I know not what general Lincoln or general Thomson may be able to effect against them; but if they stay through the summer, in that climate, there is a certain *general Fever*, that I apprehend will give a good account of most of them. Perhaps you comfort your-

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selves that our loss of blood is as great as yours. But as physicians say, there is a great difference in the facility of repairing that loss, between an old body and a young one. America adds to her numbers annually one hundred and fifty thousand souls. She therefore grows faster than you can diminish her, and will out-grow all the mischief you can do her. Have you the same prospects? But it is unnecessary for me to represent to you, or you to me, the mischiefs each nation is subjected to by the war: we all see clear enough the nonsense of continuing it; the difficulty is, where to find sense enough to put an end to it.

Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

From David Hartley, Esq., to Dr. Franklin.

London, April 22, 1779.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE bearer of this and some other papers (Mr. ——) is a very sensible and worthy gentleman, with whom I had the pleasure of contracting an acquaintance since the commencement of the American troubles, originally upon the business of the American prisoners. It is a satisfaction to me at all times to have found him a friend to the restoration of peace between the two countries. It has likewise been an additional satisfaction and confirmation to me in my own thoughts upon that subject, to find that his sentiments, I think upon most, or all of the subjects upon which we have conversed, have coincided with mine. We both seem possessed of the opinion that some plan of opening a negotiation, upon preliminaries, which each side might find to be a sufficient security to itself, might be practicable: and then, your sentiment, which you gave me in a letter some years ago, might have its free scope and effect, viz. *A little time given for cooling might have excellent effects.*

The sentiments I have opened to you in my late letters for some months past, and which I have reduced in an inclosed paper, into a more specific shape, seem to me, upon very re-

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peated reflection, to promise the fairest ground of good expectation. These propositions originate from myself, as a mediator: I have communications with both sides, but certainly no authority to make proposals from either; and perhaps neither side, if I were to make the propositions separately to each (being myself unauthorised) might give me positive consent. Each side separately might say, No, from what is called political prudence; and yet each side might secretly wish that the offer could be made, with a *done first*, from the other party. I think the proposition of a truce for five or seven years, leaving all things in the present dispute *in statu quo*, must be advantageous to all parties, if it were only in consideration that a general satisfactory peace to all parties *may* come among the *excellent effects of time given for cooling*. We can but fight it out at last. War never comes too late; wisdom may step in between. These matters have stolen upon us, and have arisen to great and formidable consequences, from small and unexpected beginnings; but henceforward, we should know by experience what to expect. If the rage of war could but be abated, for a sufficient length of time for reason and reflection to operate, I think it would never revive. I cannot pretend to forecast the result of any negotiation, but I think war would not revive; which is all that I want for my argument. Peace is a *bonum in se;* whereas the most favorable events of war are but relatively lesser evils: certainly they are evils: *mala in se*, not *bona in se*.

I hope that a cessation of hostilities would produce a renewal of reflection: but even to take the argument at the worst advantage, the two parties are at a cooling distance of three thousand miles asunder. If the flames of war could be but once extinguished, does not the Atlantic ocean contain cold water enough to prevent their bursting out again? I am very strongly of opinion that the two nations of Great Britain and North America, would accord to the proposition of a truce *for cooling*. I cannot say whether a British ministry would accord to it, because they wont tell me: nor can I say whether an American plenipotentiary would accord to it, be-

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cause, probably, you will not tell me. I put myself into your hands however, when I tell you frankly I am of opinion that both would accord to it, if there could be a *done first* on either side, to bind the bargain fast. You have the odds of me in this matter, because you know one half of the question; and I cannot give you any proof on the other side, but only my own presumptive judgment, upon observation, and upon a course of reasoning in my own thoughts.

But for France—my judgment would be, that if the proposition of the proposed preliminaries should be agreeable to America, France would do very unhandsomely to defeat it by their refusal. I likewise think it the interest of France; because their interest leads them to go to a certain point, and no further. There is a disparity in the operation of the terms of the alliance, on the part of France, and on the part of America. The more vigorously France interposes, the better for America; in proportion to their exertions they create, less or more, a diversion of the British force; this reasoning goes straight forward for America; but it is not so with France. There is a certain point, to France, beyond which their work would fail, and recoil upon themselves; if they were to drive the British ministry totally to abandon the American war, it would become totally a French war. The events of a twelvemonth past seem to bear testimony to this course of reasoning. The disadvantage upon the bargain, to America, is, that the efficacy of the French alliance to them presupposes their continuance in the war. The demur to France is, that the liberation of their new ally recoils with double weight of the war upon themselves, without any ulterior points of advantage in view, as dependent upon that alliance. I think the interest of all parties coincides with the proposition of preliminaries. The proposed preliminaries appear to me to be just and equitable to all parties; but the great object with me is to come to some preliminaries; I could almost add, whatever those preliminaries might be, provided a suspension of arms for an adequate term of years were one, I think it would be ten thousand to one against any future

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renewal of the war. It is not necessary to enter at large into the reasons which induce me to think, that the British ministry, as well as the American plenipotentiary, would consent to the terms of the proposed preliminaries; for indeed I do not know that I am founded in that opinion with respect to either, but still I believe it of both. But what can a private person do in such a case, wishing to be a mediator for peace, having access to both parties, but equally uncertain of the reception of his mediation on either side? I must hesitate to take any public step, as by a proposition in parliament, or by any other means to drive the parties to an explanation upon any specific proposals: and yet I am very unwilling to let the session pass without some proposition, upon which the parties may meet, if they should be so inclined, as I suspect them to be. I have been endeavoring to feel pulses for some months, but all is dumb-show. I cannot say that I meet with any thing discouraging, to my apprehension, either as to equitableness or practicability of the proposition for preliminaries. If I could but simply receive sufficient encouragement that I should not run any hazard of obstructing any other practicable propositions, by obtruding mine, I should be very much satisfied to come forward, in that case, with mine, to furnish a beginning at least which might lead to peace.

There is nothing that I wish so much as to have an opportunity of seeing and conversing with you, having many things to say to you; but if that cannot yet happen, I have only to say, that whatever communication you may think proper to make to me, which may lead to peace, you may be assured that I shall be most strenuous in applying it to that end. In all cases of difficulty in human life, there must be confidence somewhere to enable us to extricate nations from the evils attendant upon national disputes, as they arise out of national passions, interests, jealousies, and points of honor. I am not sure whether the extreme caution and diffidence of persons in political life be not the cause almost as frequently of the unnecessary protraction of the miseries of war, as of the final production of any superior good to any state. Peace *now*

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is better than peace a twelvemonth hence, at least by all the lives that may be lost in the meanwhile, and by all the accumulated miseries that may intervene by that delay. When I speak of the necessity of confidence, I would not have you to think, that I trust to all professions, promiscuously, with confidence: my thoughts are free respecting all parties; and for myself, if I thought it necessary for the end of attaining any additional confidence in your esteem, to enable me to co-operate the more effectually towards the restoration of peace, there is nothing that I would wish you to be assured of but this; that no fallacious offers of insincerity, nor any pretexts for covering secret designs, or for obtaining unfair advantages, shall ever pass through my hands.

Believe me truly to be, not only a lover of my country, but a sincere friend to peace, and to the rights of mankind; and ever most affectionately yours,

D. HARTLEY.

Lord North consented to Mr. Hartley's proposition, for endeavoring to procure from the American plenipotentiary or plenipotentiaries some opening, that they would be willing to commence a parley, on propositions of peace between Great Britain and America; and supposed the terms which Mr. Hartley had in view, would be something like a tacit cession of independence to America, with a truce for a certain term of years, to serve as a basis for a general treaty of accommodation and final settlement.

This last application (which was made on the 20th of April 1779) of Mr. Hartley's to lord North, after several previous conferences on the subject, is the ground of the present confidential communication with Dr. Franklin, on the part of Mr. Hartley, who states to Dr. Franklin as he did to lord North, that an auspicious beginning of a negotiation is *dimidium facti.*

Mr. Hartley's ideas of the probable course of the negotiation, would be to the following effect:

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1, Five commissioners (or any three of them) to be appointed on the part of his Britannic majesty, to treat, consult, and agree, upon the final settlement and pacification of the present troubles, upon safe, honorable, and permanent terms, subject to ratification by parliament.

2, That any one of the aforesaid commissioners may be impowered to agree, as a preliminary, to a suspension of hostilities by sea and land, for a certain term of five or seven years.

3, That any one of the aforesaid commissioners be impowered to agree, as a second preliminary, to suspend the operation and effect of any and all acts of parliament respecting America, for a certain term of five or seven years.

4, That it is expected, as a third preliminary, that America should be released, free and unengaged, from any treaties with foreign powers, which may tend to embarrass or defeat the present proposed negotiation.

5, That a general treaty for negotiation shall be set on foot as soon as may be, after the agreement of the foregoing preliminaries.

N. B. A doubt seeming to arise from lord North, relative to the probability of any explanatory communication on the part of Dr. Franklin, Mr. Hartley expressed, he thought it possible that as a known friend to peace, he might be considered by Dr. Franklin as a depôt of any communications which may serve from time to time to facilitate the terms of peace: which therefore prevents this communication being considered as any direct overture from lord North to Dr. Franklin, or from Dr. Franklin to lord North; but as it is merely a mediatorial proposition of Mr. Hartley, as a private person, for the purpose of bringing the parties to a parley.

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To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, May 4, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your several favors, viz. one of April the 10th, one of the 20th, and two of the 22d, all on the same day, but by different conveyances.

I need not repeat, what we have each of us so often repeated, the wish for peace. I will begin by frankly assuring you, that though I think a direct, immediate peace, the best mode of present accommodation, for Britain as well as for America, yet if that *is not* at this time practicable, and a truce is practicable, I should not be against a truce; but this is merely on motives of *general humanity*, to obviate the evils men devilishly inflict on men in time of war, and to lessen as much as possible, the similarity of earth and hell. For with regard to particular advantages, respecting the states I am connected with, I am persuaded it is theirs to continue the war, till England shall be reduced to that perfect impotence of mischief, which alone can prevail with her to let other nations enjoy, "*Peace, Liberty, and Safety.*" I think, however, that a *short* truce, which must, therefore, be an *armed* truce, and put all parties to an almost equal expense with a continued war, is by no means desirable.

But this proposition of a truce, if made at all, should be made to France, at the same time it is made to America. They have each of them too much honor, as well as too much sense, to listen separately to any propositions which tend to separate them from each other.

I will now give you my thoughts on your ideas of a negotiation, in the order you have placed them. If you will number them in your copy, you will readily see to which my observations refer, and I may therefore be more concise.

To the 1st, I do not see the necessity or use of five commissioners. A number of talkers lengthen discussions, and often embarrass instead of aiding a settlement. Their different particular views, private interests and jealousies of each

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other are likewise so many rubs in the way, and it sometimes happens that a number cannot agree to what each privately thinks reasonable, and would have agreed to, or perhaps proposed if alone. But this as the parties please.

To the 2d, The term of twenty-one years, would be better for all sides. The suspension of hostilities should be expressed to be, between all parties at war: and that the British troops and ships of war now in any of the United States be withdrawn.

To the 3d, This seems needless, and is a thing that may be done or omitted as you please: America has no concern about those acts of parliament.

To the 4th, The reason of proposing this is not understood, nor the use of it, nor what inducement there can be for us to agree to it. When you come to treat with both your enemies, you may negotiate away as much of these engagements as you can; but powers who have made a firm solid league, evidently useful to both, can never be prevailed with to dissolve it, for the vague expectation of another *in nubibus;* nor even on the certainty *that* another will be proposed without knowing what are to be its articles. America has no desire of being free from her engagements to France. The chief is that of continuing the war in conjunction with her, and not making a separate peace: and this is an obligation not in the power of America to dissolve, being an obligation of *gratitude and justice,* towards a nation which is engaged in a war on her account, and for her protection; and would be forever binding, whether such an article existed or not in the treaty; and though it did not exist, an honest American would cut off his right hand rather than sign an agreement with England contrary to the spirit of it.

To the 5th, As soon as you please.

If you had mentioned France in your proposed suspension of arms, I should immediately have shewn it to the minister, and have endeavored to support that idea. As it stands, I am in doubt whether I shall communicate your paper or not,

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though by your writing it is so fair, it seems as if you intended it. If I do, I shall acquaint you with the result.

The bill of which you send me a copy was an excellent one at the time, and might have had great and good effects; if instead of telling us haughtily that our humble petition should receive no answer, that the ministry had received and enacted that bill into a law. It might have erected a wall of brass round England, if such a measuse had been adopted when Friar Bacon's brazen head cried out, TIME IS! But the wisdom of it was not seen, till after the fatal cry of TIME'S PAST!

I am, my dear friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

Passy, Feb. 2, 1780.

DEAR FRIEND,

IT is some time since I procured the discharge of your captain Stephenson. He did not call here in his way home. I hope he arrived safely, and had a happy meeting with his friends and family.

I have long postponed answering you letter of the 29th of June. A principal point in it, on which you seemed to desire my opinion, was, the conduct you thought America ought to hold, in case her allies should, from motives of ambition or resentment of former injuries, desire her to continue the war, beyond what should be reasonable and consistent with her particular interests. As often as I took up your letter in order to answer it, this suggestion displeased me, and I laid it down again. I saw no occasion for discussing such a question at present, nor any good end it could serve, to discuss it before the case should happen; and I saw inconveniences in discussing it. I wish therefore you had not mentioned it. For the rest, I am as much for peace as ever I was, and as heartily desirous of seeing the war ended, as I was to prevent its beginning; of which your ministers know I gave a strong proof

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before I left England when in order to an accommodation, I offered at my own risque, without orders for so doing, and without knowing whether I should be owned in doing it, to pay the whole damage of destroying the tea at Boston, provided the acts made against that province were repealed. This offer was refused. I still think it would have been wise to have accepted it. If the congress have therefore entrusted to others rather than to me, the negotiations for peace, when such shall be set on foot, as has been reported; it is perhaps because they may have heard of a very singular opinion of mine, that there hardly ever existed such a thing as a bad peace, or a good war: and that I might therefore easily be induced to make improper concessions. But at the same time they and you may be assured, that I should think the destruction of our whole country, and the extirpation of our whole people, preferable to the infamy of abandoning our allies.

As neither you nor I are at present authorised to treat of peace, it seems to little purpose to make or consider propositions relating to it. I have had so many such put into my hands that I am tired of them. I will however give your proposal of a ten years' truce this answer: that, though I think a solid peace made at once, a much better thing; yet, if the truce is practicable and the peace not, I should be for agreeing to it. At least I see at present no sufficient reasons for refusing it, provided our allies approved of it. But this is merely a private opinion of mine, which perhaps may be changed by reasons that at present do not offer themselves. This, however, I am clear in, that withdrawing your troops will be best for you, if you wish a cordial reconciliation, and that the truce should produce a peace. To show that it was not done by compulsion, being required as a condition of the truce, they might be withdrawn beforehand, for various good reasons. But all this is idle chat, as I am persuaded that there is no disposition for peace on your side, and that this war will yet last many years. I know nothing and believe nothing of any terms offered unto sir Henry Clinton.

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The prisoners taken in the Serapis and Countess of Scarborough being all treated for in Holland, and exchanged there, I hope Mr. Brown's son is now safe at home with his father. It grieved me that the exchange there, which you may remember I immediately proposed, was so long delayed. Much human misery might have been prevented by a prompt compliance: and so might a great deal, by the execution of parole promises taken at sea: but since I see no regard is paid to them in England, I must give orders to our armed ships that cruise in Europe, to secure their prisoners as well as they can, and lodge them in French or Spanish prisons. I have written something on this affair to Mr. Hodgson, and sent to him the second passport for a cartel to Morlaix, supposing you to be out of town. The number of prisoners we now have in France is not easily ascertained. I suppose it exceeds one hundred; but you may be assured that the number which may be brought over by the two cartels, shall be fully exchanged by adding to those taken by us as many as will make up the complement out of those taken by the French, with whom we have an account since the exchange in Holland of those we carried in there. I wish therefore you would, as was proposed, clear your prisons of the Americans who have been so long confined there. The cartels that may arrive at Morlaix, will not be detained.

You may have heard, that accounts upon oath have been taken in America, by order of congress, of the British barbarities committed there. It is expected of me to make a school book of them, and to have thirty-five prints designed here by good artists and engraved, each expressing one or more of the different horrid facts, to be inserted in the book, in order to impress the minds of children and posterity, with a deep sense of your bloody, and insatiable malice and wickedness. Every kindness I hear of, done by an Englishman to an American prisoner, makes me resolve not to proceed in the work: hoping a reconciliation may yet take place. But every fresh instance of your devilism weakens that resolution, and makes me abominate the thought of a reunion with such a peo-

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ple. You, my friend, have often persuaded me, and I believed it, that the war was not theirs, nor approved by them. But their suffering it so long to continue, and the wretched rulers to remain who carry it on, makes me think you have too good an opinion of them.

Adieu, my dear friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

London, July 17, 1780.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

INCLOSED I send you a copy of a conciliatory bill[k] which was proposed in the house of commons on the 27th of

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[k] *Draft of a proposed Bill for Conciliation with America.*

A Bill to invest the crown with sufficient powers to treat, consult, and finally to agree upon the means of restoring peace with the provinces of *North America.*

Whereas many unfortunate subjects of contest, have of late years subsisted between *Great Britain* and the several provinces of *North America*, hereinafter recited, viz. *New Hampshire, Massachusetts' Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Three Lower Counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina,* and *Georgia*, which have brought on the calamities of war between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces: to the end therefore that the farther effusion of blood may be prevented, and that peace may be restored, may it please your majesty, that it be enacted, and be it enacted by the king's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same: that it shall and may be lawful for his majesty, by letters patent, under the great seal of *Great Britain*, to authorise and empower any person or persons, to treat, consult, and finally to agree with any person or persons, properly authorised on the part of the aforesaid provinces of *North America*, upon the means of restoring peace between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces, according to the powers in this act contained.

And be it further enacted, that in order to facilitate the good purposes of this act, his majesty may lawfully enable any such person or persons, so appointed by his majesty's letters patent, as aforesaid, to order and

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last month. It was rejected. You and I have had so much intercourse upon the subject of restoring peace between Great

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proclaim a cessation of hostilities, on the part of his majesty's forces, by sea and land, for any time, and under any conditions or restrictions.

And be it further enacted, that in order to lay a good foundation for a cordial reconciliation and lasting peace, between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces of *North America*, by restoring an amicable intercourse between the same, as soon as possible, his majesty may lawfully enable any such person or persons, so appointed by his majesty's letters patent, as aforesaid, to enter into, and to ratify, from time to time, any article or articles of intercourse and pacification, which article or articles, so entered into and ratified, from time to time, shall remain in full force and effect for the certain term of ten years, from the first day of *August*, one thousand seven hundred and eighty.

Provided also, and be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that in order to remove any obstructions which may arise to the full and effectual execution of any article or articles of intercourse and pacification, as before mentioned, that it shall, and may be lawful for his majesty, by any instrument under his sign manual, countersigned by one or more of his majesty's principal secretaries of state, to authorise and empower any such person or persons, so appointed by his majesty's letters patent, as aforesaid, to suspend for the term of ten years, from the first day of *August*, one thousand seven hundred and eighty, the operation and effect of any act or acts of parliament, which are now in force, respecting the aforesaid provinces of *North America*, or any clause or clauses, proviso or provisos, in any such act or acts of parliament contained; in as much as they, or any of them, may obstruct the full effect and execution of any such article or articles of intercourse and pacification, which may be entered into and ratified as before mentioned, between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces of *North America*.

And be it further enacted, that in order to establish perpetual reconcilement and peace, between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces of *North America*, it is hereby required, and be it enacted, that all or any article or articles of intercourse and pacification, which shall be entered into and ratified, for the certain term of ten years, as before mentioned, shall from time to time be laid before the two houses of parliament, for their consideration, as the perpetual basis of reconcilement and peace, between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces of *North America*; and that any such article or articles of intercourse and pacification as before mentioned, when the same shall have been confirmed in parliament, shall remain in full force and effect for ever.

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Britain and America, that I think there is nothing farther left to be said upon the subject. You will perceive by the general tenor of the bill, that it proposes a general power to treat. It chalks out a line of negotiation in very general terms. I remain in the sentiments which I ever have, and which I believe I ever shall entertain, viz. those seeking of peace upon honorable terms. I shall always be ready and most desirous to conspire in any measures which may facilitate peace.

I am ever, your most affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.

To David Hartley, Esq.

Passy, June 30, 1781.

I RECEIVED my dear friend's kind letter of the 15th instant, and immediately communicated your request of a passport to M. le Comte de Vergennes. His answer, which I have but just received, expresses an opinion, that the circumstance of his granting a passport to you, as you mention the purpose of your coming, to be the discoursing with me on the subject of peace, might, considering your character, occasion many inconvenient reports and speculations; but that he would make no difficulty of giving it, if you assured me that you were authorised for such purpose, by your ministry, which he does not think at all likely; otherwise he judges it best that I should not encourage your coming. Thus it seems I cannot have, at present the pleasure you were so kind as to propose for me. I can only join with you in earnest wishes for peace, a blessing which I shall hardly live to see.

With the greatest esteem and respect, I am ever, dear sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

And be it further enacted, that this act shall continue to be in force until the thirty-first day of *December*, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-one.

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From Mr. Wm. Alexander, to Dr. Franklin.

Paris, Dec. 15, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,

I TOLD you, the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you at Passy, that I would make a trip to London, but had no notion it would be so soon. On coming to town last evening, I found such pressing letters, that I propose setting off this evening, or to-morrow at latest. I would have called if possible to receive your commands, but as I am pinched in time, must content myself with sending for them. The bearer will call for them an hour after receiving this letter.

I shall probably be interrogated about the dispositions in this country to peace. My own idea is that you seek only your independence, and that *this* country, were that secured, will be moderate in other matters, as the object of the war does not seem to be conquest. Let me know if this is proper language. I notice that a courtly argument has been used in parliament for continuing the continental war, that withdrawing would make you insolent, and give France exclusive advantages—were it not proper, that this were contradicted flatly? Any commissions you may have will be taken care of, and I shall be back, barring accidents, in three weeks.

Wishing you every thing that is good, I remain with equal esteem and respect, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

W. ALEXANDER.

Answer to Mr. Alexander.

Passy, Dec. 15, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I THANK you for informing me of your intended journey. You know so well the prevailing sentiments here, and mine in particular, that it is unnecessary for me to express them; and having never been believed on that side the water, it would be useless. I will say however, that I think the language you

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mention very proper to be held, as it is the truth; though the truth may not always be proper.

Wishing you a good voyage, and happy return to your children, I am with great esteem, dear sir, yours, &c. &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

[Sent by Mr. Alexander, with a pamphlet.]

Passy, Dec. 15, 1781.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your favor of September 26, containing your very judicious proposition of securing the spectators in the opera and play-houses from the danger of fire. I communicated it where I thought it might be useful. You will see by the inclosed, that the subject has been under consideration here. Your concern for the security of life, even the lives of your enemies, does honor to your heart and your humanity. But what are the lives of a few idle haunters of play-houses, compared with the many thousands of worthy men and honest industrious families, butchered and destroyed by this devilish war! O! that we could find some happy invention, to stop the spreading of the flames, and put an end to so horrid a conflagration!

Adieu, I am ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

From David Hartley, Esq., to Dr. Franklin.

London, Jan. 2, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE received the favor of yours of the 15th of December, by Mr. Alexander. I most heartily join with you in the wish that we could find some means to stop the spreading flames of this *devilish war*. I will not despair. The communications which he has imparted to me from you, have revived

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my hopes of peace. I laid them before the minister immediately. We are at a suspense for the present upon a very material preliminary. I did intend writing to you at the present pause, that we might make our ground good as we go on, but an accident which has happened obliges me to do it without delay. For having had a most essential question transmitted to me from lord North for explanation, when I would have applied to Mr. Alexander, I could not hear of him; and now I find that he has left his hotel these four or five days, and his return uncertain, I must apply to you. I will state to you what has passed.

Upon my first interview with Mr. Alexander, he told me that the late events would make no difference in the prospect of peace; that America had no other wish than to see a termination of this war; that no events would make them unreasonable on that subject, which sentiments likewise your letter expresses; and that no formal recognition of independence would be required. I thought this a very fair opening; but the next point which he explained to me, seemed to be still more material towards peace, viz. that America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain, and their allies were disposed to consent to it. I believe that it has been the unfortunate union of common cause between America and France, which has for the last three years turned aside the wish of the people of England for peace. I verily believe (so deep is the jealousy between England and France) that this country would fight for a straw to the last man, and the last shilling, rather than be dictated to by France. I therefore, consider this as the greatest rub out of the way. I have often argued this point with you upon former occasions, having at all times foreseen, that it would be the greatest rub in the road to peace, and I have often stated it to you as an act of *justice* due to America from her allies, not to drag her through a war of European resentments and jealousies, beyond her original views and engagements; and moreover I think the separation of the causes in the negotiation promises much the shortest road to a general peace.

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Upon Mr. Alexander's opening thus much to me, I told him I would apply for the earliest opportunity, of laying these matters before the minister. Accordingly on Friday morning (December 21) I applied through the means of the earl of Guilford (father to lord North) a nobleman of a most respectable character, advanced in years, and attached by every possible tie to a son now in a most arduous situation. I therefore requested the favor through his hands, as giving me the most conciliatory access to the minister, to whom I was preparing to make an application for peace. After the appointment was made with lord North for Friday evening, I returned to Mr. Alexander, to consider the specific manner and terms in which I should make my application. It had occurred to me, from what Mr. Alexander had stated to me, that the conciliatory bill[1] which I had moved in the last parliament, on June 27, 1780, would still serve as a foundation to proceed upon, I therefore carried it with me. He told me that he and you knew the sense of the bill very well, and that it would be entirely consonant to your sentiments, that I should state it to lord North, as drawing an outline for negotiation of peace. However to avoid all errors, I read the bill through to him, and explained the view of each clause, viz. the style of *provinces of North America*—a general phrase to avoid any term denoting dependence or independence: the truce for an indefinite term: the articles of intercourse for ten years certain—to restore an amicable correspondence—and to abate animosities: the suspension of certain acts of parliament—to avoid every possible question of dependence or independence: and to finish the work, by a ratification of each article of intercourse as agreed to, thereby to prevent all possible return of war. I compared the articles of intercourse for a short term, and their ratification into a permanent peace, to a well known mode of proceeding in the laws of England, by lease and release, from temporary to perpe-

[1] See Mr. Hartley's letter of July, 1780.

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tual amity and peace. Upon these grounds I took my commission from him for lord North, viz. the question of dependence or independence *sub silentio*—a separate treaty with America, and to state the conciliatory bill of June, 1780, as the outline of negotiation. I saw lord North in the evening, and stated the foregoing propositions to him, as I have now stated them to you. After having stated the compromise *sub silentio* and the separate treaty, I left with lord North the copy of the bill of June, 1780, together with a paper, entitled, Conciliatory Propositions, as explanatory of that bill (both inclosed with this). The next morning (viz. Saturday, December 22), I saw Mr. Alexander, and reported to him what I had stated to lord North, and shewed him a copy of the paper, entitled, Conciliatory Propositions. He told me that I had executed my commission perfectly to his intelligence of the matter. I should tell you, that at the conclusion of my conversation with lord North, we both settled jointly the result thus, "I recommend to your lordship the propositions which I have had the honor of stating to you, as *general grounds of a proposed negotiation, leading towards peace, under liberal constructions.*" Lord North said in answer, "so I understand them."

Upon this footing matters rested for some days. On Sunday last (December 30), I received a message from lord North, through the means of lord Guildford, requesting an explanation of this point, viz. "Who is authorised to treat on the part of America? whether you or Mr. Adams, or both jointly; and whether the propositions above stated, would be acknowleged, as general grounds of negotiation towards peace, by the person or persons authorised to treat; because it was necessary, before he could lay a matter of so great importance before the cabinet council, that he should be entitled to say,—These propositions and general outlines come to me from responsible and authorised persons." The moment I received the request of lord North, I agreed entirely with the necessity of an explanation on that head. I had partly expected such an inquiry, and it gave me satisfaction when it came, as I thought it the first reply towards a parley. If the

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propositions had not gained some attention it would have been of very little importance to have inquired whence they came. As to the caution itself, it appears to me not only prudent but indispensable. The forms of caution in such cases are the essentials of caution. I had determined on my own account before this message to have writ to you, that I might have received your sentiments directly from yourself without any other intervention, that we might proceed with caution and certainty in a matter of such infinite importance. This message has only quickened my despatch. The two points of explanation requested, I take to be these; whether the outlines above recited are properly stated, always considering that they imply no farther than *general grounds of negotiation towards peace; under liberal constructions;* and secondly, by what authorised person or persons, any answer on this subject would be accepted; in short a requisition of credentials, preparatory to a formal answer, which is so much the more necessary on the supposition of a favorable reception of the first hint towards negotiation.

When I last saw Mr. Alexander, viz. about four or five days ago, he had met with some desponding impressions, as if the ministry were indisposed to peace, and that things would not do, &c. He did not tell me upon what ground he had formed such apprehension; however, lest he should have imparted any such by letter to you, I will state that point to you because it may have infinite ill consequences to be too touchy on such suspicions. A premature jealousy may create the very evil it suspects. The ministry in this country are not every thing. The sense of the people when really expressed and exerted, would be most prevalent. Suppose then it were a proved point, that every man in the ministry were in his heart adverse to peace. What then? withhold all overtures! By no means. I should advise the very contrary in the strongest manner. I should say, let the overtures be made so much the more public and explicit, by those who do wish for peace. It is the unfortunate state of things which has hitherto bound the cause of France to any possible treaty with America,

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and which has thereby thrown a national damp upon any actual public exertions to procure a negotiation for peace with America. I have the strongest opinion that if it were publicly known to the people of England that a negotiation might be opened with America, upon the terms above specified, that all the ministry together, if they were ill disposed to a man, would not venture to thwart such a measure. But why should it be supposed, that the ministry, to a man, are ill disposed to a peace? Suppose them to be half and half, and the public wish and voice of the people in favor of negotiation, it is evident on which side the balance would incline. But why should we seek to throw a damp prematurely upon any chance? Why presume even against any individual? I grant, that it would be a bitter trial of humility to be brought to a formal recognition of independence at the haughty command of France, and I believe every part of the nation would proceed to every extremity before they would submit to that. But if that touchy point can be provided for, *sub silentio*, and if the proposed treaty with America may be carried on free from control by France, let us give the cause of peace a fair trial; at the worst we should but be where we were if we should fail. But why should we expect to fail, when the greatest rub is removed, by the liberty of entering separately into a treaty? I think it a most favorable event, leading towards peace. Give us a truce with its concomitants, and a little time so given for cooling will have most excellent effects on both sides. Eternal peace and conciliation may then follow.

I send this to you by the quickest despatch, that we may bring this point to a fair issue before the meeting of parliament. God prosper the blessed work of peace.

I am ever, yours most affectionately,

D. HARTLEY.

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Conciliatory Bill.

In the title and preamble of the bill the words *provinces of North America* are used as general words, neither implying dependence or independence.

Clause 1. *The Truce* is taken from the conciliatory act of 1778, and is indefinite as to the proposed duration of the truce. Under this clause it might be proposed to negotiate three points, viz. the removal of the British troops from the thirteen provinces of North America, and connectedly with this article, a stipulation for the security of the friends of the British government. The third article might be a stipulation that the respective parties, during the continuance of the truce, should not neither directly or indirectly give assistance to the enemiesof each other.

Clause 2. *Articles of intercourse and pacification.* Under this clause some arrangements might be settled, for establishing a free and mutual intercourse, civil and commercial, between Great Britain and the aforesaid provinces of North America.

Clause 3. *Suspension of certain acts of parliament.* By this clause a free communication may be kept open between the two countries, during the negotiation for peace, without stumbling against any claim of rights which might draw into contest the question of dependence or independence.

Clause 4. *The ratification by parliament.* The object of this clause is to consolidate peace and conciliation, step by step, as the negotiation may proceed; and to prevent, as far as possible, any return of war, after the first declaration of a truce. By the operation of this clause, a temporary truce may be converted into a perpetual and permanent peace.

Clause 5. *A temporary act.* This clause, creating a temporary act for a specific purpose of negotiation in view, is taken from the act of 1778.

PS. January 8, 1782.

Since writing this letter, I have seen Mr. Alexander, and shall see him from time to time to communicate with him. I

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do not suppose I shall have an answer from lord North till the preliminary points are so settled as to enable him to give an answer in form. Ministry might undoubtedly give a short negative, if they thought proper; but I do not expect that. You may be assured that I have, and shall continue to enforce, every argument in the most conciliatory manner to induce a negotiation. I am very sorry for Mr. A.'s confinement, on his own account, and on that of his friends, and because probably in the future state of this business, his personal exertions may be very serviceable in the cause of peace. Every assistance and every exertion of mine will always be most heartily devoted to that cause. I have nothing farther to add, either upon my own reflections or from my subsequent conversations with Mr. Alexander, to what I have stated in the foregoing letter. If we once make a good beginning upon the plan there stated, I should hope that such a negotiation, founded on such principles, would promise fair to produce every salutary and pacific consequence in the event.

[Answer to the Foregoing.]

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, Jan. 15, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED a few days since your favor of the 2d instant, in which you tell me, that Mr. Alexander had informed you "America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain." I am persuaded that your strong desire for peace has misled you, and occasioned your greatly misunderstanding Mr. Alexander; as I think it scarce possible he should have asserted a thing *so utterly void of foundation.* I remember that you have, as you say, often urged this on former occasions, and that it always gave me more disgust than my friendship for you permitted me to express. But since you have now gone so far as to carry such a proposition to lord North, as arising from us, it is necessary that I should be explicit with you, and tell you plainly, that

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I never had such an idea, and I believe there is not a man in America, a few *English Tories* excepted, that would not spurn at the thought of deserting a noble and generous friend, for the sake of a truce with an unjust and cruel enemy. I have again read over your Conciliatory Bill, with the manuscript propositions that accompany it; and am concerned to find, that one cannot give vent to a simple wish for peace, a mere sentiment of humanity, without having it interpreted as *a disposition to submit to any base conditions* that may be offered us, rather than continue the war; for, on no other supposition could you propose to us a truce of ten years, during which we are to engage not to assist France, while you continue the war with her. A truce too, wherein nothing is to be mentioned that may weaken your pretensions to dominion over us, which you may therefore resume at the end of the term, or at pleasure; when we should have so covered ourselves with infamy, by our treachery to our first friend, as that no other nation can ever after be disposed to assist us, how cruel so ever you might think fit to treat us. Believe me, my dear friend, America has too much understanding, and is too sensible of the value of the world's good opinion, to forfeit it all by such perfidy. The congress will never instruct their commissioners to obtain a peace on such ignominious terms; and though there can be but few things, in which I should venture to disobey their orders; yet, if it were possible for them to give me such an order as this, I should certainly refuse to act; I should instantly renounce their commission, and banish myself for ever from so infamous a country.

We are a little ambitious too of your esteem; and as I think we have acquired some share of it, by our manner of making war with you, I trust we shall not hazard the loss of it, by consenting meanly to a dishonorable peace.

Lord North was wise in demanding of you some authorised acknowlegment of the propositition from authorised persons. He justly thought it too improbable to be relied on, so as to lay it before the privy council. You can now inform him, that the whole has been a mistake, and that no such propo-

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sition, as that of a separate peace, has been, is, or is ever likely to be made by me; and I believe by no other authorised person whatever in behalf of America. You may farther, if you please, inform his lordship, that Mr. Adams, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Jay, and myself, have long since been impowered, by a special commission, to treat of peace, whenever a negotiation shall be opened for that purpose: but it must always be understood, that this is to be in conjunction with our allies, conformably to the solemn treaties made with them.

You have, my dear friend, a strong desire to promote peace, and it is a most laudable and virtuous desire. Permit me then to wish, that you would, in order to succeed as a mediator, avoid such invidious expressions as may have an effect in preventing your purpose. You tell me that no stipulation for our independence must be in the treaty, because you "verily believe (so deep is the jealousy between England and France) that England would fight for a straw, to the last man and the last shilling, rather than be *dictated to* by France." And again, that, "the nation would proceed to every extremity, rather than be brought to a formal recognition of independence at the *haughty command* of France." My dear sir, if every proposition of terms for peace, that may be made by one of the parties at war, is to be called and considered by the other as *dictating*, and a *haughty command*, and for that reason rejected with a resolution of fighting to the last man, rather than agree to it; you see that in such case no treaty of peace is possible. In fact we began the war for independence on your government, which we found tyrannical, and this before France had any thing to do with our affairs; the article in our treaty whereby the "two parties engage, that neither of them shall conclude either truce or peace with Great Britain, without the formal consent of the other first obtained; and mutually engage, not to lay down their arms until the independence of the United States shall have been formally or *tacitly* assured, by the treaty or treaties that shall terminate the war," was an article inserted at our instance, being in our favor. And you see, by the article itself, that your great

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difficulty may be easily got over, as a formal acknowlegment of our independence is not made necessary. But we hope by God's help to enjoy it; and I suppose we shall fight for it as long as we are able. I do not make any remarks upon the other propositions, because I think, that unless they were made by authority, the discussion of them is unnecessary and may be inconvenient. The supposition of our being disposed to make a separate peace, I could not be silent upon, as it materially affected our reputation and its essential interests. If I have been a little warm on that offensive point, reflect on your repeatedly urging it, and endeavor to excuse me. Whatever may be the fate of our poor countries, let you and I die as we have lived, in peace with each other.

Assuredly I continue with great and sincere esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

From D. Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

London, Jan. 24, 1782.

My dear Sir,

I RECEIVED yours of the 15th instant, this day. I must take the earliest opportunity of setting you right in one mistake, which runs through your whole letter, and which to you, under that mistake, must be a very delicate point. You seem to apprehend that America has been stated in the proposition to lord North, as "disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain;" but you meet the condition; viz. in the words immediately following, "*and that their allies were disposed to consent to it.*" There cannot possibly be any supposition of treachery to allies, in any proposition to which they may *consent*. A separate treaty, with the *consent* of the allies of America, was the proposition communicated to me by Mr. Alexander, and which I laid before the minister, and which I reported back again to Mr. Alexander, in writing, when I shewed him the paper entitled "Conciliatory Propositions," which I took care to reduce to writing, with a view

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of avoiding mistakes: therefore I have not *misunderstood* Mr. Alexander. I have since seen Mr. A. many times, and he has always stated one and the same proposition, viz..that America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty, because their *allies were disposed to consent that they should:* therefore there cannot exist a suspicion of treachery. It occurred to me once whilst I was writing, to bar against that misconstruction: but having specified the *consent of the allies of America,* in the same sentence, I could not conceive such a misconstruction to have been possible. You have mistaken another point greatly. You say, "a truce for *ten* years." There is not in the bill any such disposition or thought; on the contrary, it is specified in the inclosed paper, that it is kept *indefinite,* for the sole purpose of avoiding the suspicion which you have suggested. The truce may be for twenty, or fifty, or one hundred years, (in my opinion the longer the better.) But in any case, what I mean now to state is the *indefinite* term in the bill. The articles of intercourse are only proposed for ten years certain, just to strew the way with inviting and conciliatory facilities, in the hope that *a little time given for cooling* would confirm a perpetual peace. If I were permitted to be the mediator, I should certainly propose the truce for twenty years: but if no more than ten years could be obtained, I would certainly not refuse such a ground of pacification and treaty. I refer you to several of my letters two or three years ago, for the justification of my sentiments on that head. Another point: look at all my letters since 1778; and see if I have at any time suggested any breach of treaty or of honor: on the contrary, I think a faithless nation, if exterminated, would not deserve the pity of mankind. I speak of all *I know* in the treaty between America and France, and what I think *reasonable* upon the case itself. If America is farther bound than we *know* of, they must abide by it. I speak to the apparent and public foundation of the treaty, article second with the provision of *tacitly,* from article eight: and now I refer you to my letter to you, as long ago as April 10, 1779: "If beyond this essential and directed end, and upon grounds

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totally unconnected with that alliance, not upon motives of magnanimity *for the relief of an innocent people*, but from distinct and unconnected motives of private European sentiments, America should be dragged into the consequence of a general European war, she may apply to France the apostrophe of the poet, speaking in the person of Helen to Paris, "*non hoc pollicitus tuæ.*" You see therefore that our sentiments have been uniform, and as I think reasonable, because I still remain in those sentiments. Suppose for instance (and you call it the case of a straw if you please) that Great Britain and France should continue the war for ten years, on the point of a commissary at Dunkirk, aye or no:—would it be *reasonable* or a *casus fœderis*, that America should be precluded from a separate treaty for ten years, and therefore involved in the consequential war, after the *essential and direct ends* of the treaty of February 6, 1778, were accomplished. As far as my judgment goes, upon the knowlege of such facts as are public, I should think it was neither *reasonable* nor a *casus fœderis*. This is the breviate of the argument, in which there is no thought or suggestion of any breach of faith or honor. I did conclude that France was disposed to give their *consent*, because Mr. Alexander informed me so, and because I thought it *reasonable* that France should *consent*, and *reasonable* that America should enjoy the benefit of that *consent*. I transmitted it to lord North, as a proposition temperate and pacific on the part of America, and consented to by their allies, and on no other ground did I transmit or propose it. All that your letter tells me, is, "that America will not break it with her allies, and that her commissioners will not entertain such a thought:" but give me leave to add, that they, as honest men, cannot disdain such a thought, more than I do; every honest man ought to disdain the office, or the thought of proposing a breach of faith to them. I have often told you, that such an office or such a thought shall never be mine. But you have not told me that France would not be *disposed* to *consent* to a separate treaty of peace, for that ally whose peace was the original declared object of the alliance. In the case supposed, viz. of

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certain supposed or real punctilios between two proud and belligerent nations, which might possibly involve America, for years, in a war totally unconnected with the objects of the alliance. Besides, if any rubs should occur in the road to a general peace, France is too proud a nation to say, that beyond the *policy* of contributing to the separation of America from Great Britain in any contest of rivalship, they cannot meet their rivals in war, without the *assistance* of America. I cannot conceive that the minister of a great belligerent nation could entertain such a thought, as affecting their own sense of honor, or be so unreasonable to their allies, as to withhold consent to their peace, when *the essential and direct ends* of the alliance were satisfied. Observe, I do not contend against a general peace: on the contrary, I mean to recommend the most prudent means for producing it. But, as an anxious lover of peace, I feel terrors which dismay me, and I consider the dangers which may obstruct a general peace, arising from the pride and prejudices of nations, which are not to be controled in their heat by arguments of reason or philosophy. Can any man in reason and philosophy tell me, why any two nations in the world are called natural enemies, as if it were the ordinance of God and nature. I fear it is too deeply engraved in the passions of man, and for that reason I would elude and evade the contest with such passions. I would strew the road to peace with flowers, and not with thorns. *Haughty*, and *dictating*, and *commands*, are no words of mine; I abhor them, and I fear them. I would elude their force by gentle means, and step by step. In article eight, there are the following words: "By the treaty or treaties that shall terminate the war." Let us have one treaty begun, and I think the rest would follow. I fear when contending passions are raised, lest we should lose all by grasping at too much.

January 25. I have just seen Mr. Alexander, and have talked the matter over with him. I send you a copy of his sentiments upon it, which, for the sake of avoiding farther

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mistakes, he committed to paper, and which, I think, justify me in saying, that I understood from him, that France was *disposed to give their consent*, as he *explained* it to me, and as I explained it to the minister. He did not say, nor did I understand him to say, that he was *authorised* by the French ministry, or by any one else, to declare that France had bound herself to consent; or that any such requisition had been made to her; but that it was his opinion that France would consent, and that I might proceed upon that presumption, so far as to recommend overtures of negotiation. Accordingly the phrase of my letter to you, is, that he *explained* to me, *that their allies were disposed to consent.* You see what his opinion is on this day; and as you have not told me that France will consent, the *reasonable* probability which still remains with me, for the hopes of opening an amicable treaty, remains as it did. I could not delay saying thus, by the very first mail, upon a point equally delicate to me, as well as to yourself. My dear friend, I beg of you not to think, either that you can be considered as capable of entertaining, or that I should be capable of suggesting, any unworthy or dishonorable propositions. If there has been any misunderstanding, it is now cleared up: and the ground for negotiation remains open as before. I therefore still entertain my hopes.

I am ever, your affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.

Explanatory Letter of Mr. Alexander, to Mr. Hartley, referred to in the preceding.

DEAR SIR,

AS I had not the opportunity of seeing your correspondence at this time, I was unable to prevent the misunderstanding that seems to have arisen. There is no proposition of which I am more convinced, than that, "Nothing can be done without the concurrence of allies." But, as the chief ob-

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struction towards an accommodation seemed to me to lie in the personal character of some who have great weight in this matter, and as the object of the war (the independence of America) seems, in the opinion of all men, to be secured, my own opinion was and still is, that there was so much wisdom and moderation, where prejudice prevents us from seeing it, that, provided the ends of the war are accomplished, to the satisfaction of all parties, they will be very ready to let us out of it, in the most gentle manner, by consenting equally that the business shall go on in one, two, or three separate deeds, as shall be most palatable here: and to doubt that our friends are desirous of finishing the contest, with the approbation of their allies, is to doubt their understanding.

I am, with the greatest esteem, yours, &c.

W. ALEXANDER.

London, Jan. 25, 1782.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

London, Feb. 1, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I WRITE to you one line by this mail, only to tell you, that I have seen the minister since I last wrote to you, and that he never did entertain the idea one moment of any propositions being thrown out on your part in the least degree inconsistent with the strictest honor and faith to the allies. I had no occasion to guard against or to explain any such thought, having at all times conveyed the contrary to him in the most explicit terms. I transmit this to you for your full satisfaction. We have had much conversation on the subject of peace, which you may be sure I have most zealously endeavored to enforce. *I should not do him justice if I did not add that I believe his wishes are for peace,* and that he gives the most serious attention to every argument, and to the suggestion of every practicable means on that subject. I have stated many things for his consideration, and for con-

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sultation with others, after which I shall see him again. I heartily wish the result may be favorable to the prospect of peace.

I am ever, your affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, Feb. 16, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your favor of the 24th past. You have taken pains to rectify a mistake of mine relating to the aim of your letters. I accept kindly your replication, and I hope you will excuse my error, when you reflect that I knew of no consent given by France to our treating separately of peace, and that there has been mixed in some of your conversations and letters various reasonings, to show that if France should require something of us that was unreasonable, we then should not be obliged by our treaty to join with her in continuing the war. As there had never been such requisition, what could I think of such discourses? I thought as I suppose an honest woman would think, if a gallant should entertain her with suppositions of cases, in which infidelity to her husband would be justifiable. Would not she naturally imagine, seeing no other foundation or motive for such conversation, that if he could once get her to admit the general principle, his intended next step would be to persuade her that such a case actually existed. Thus knowing your dislike of France, and your strong desire of recovering America to England, I was impressed with the idea that such an infidelity on our part would not be disagreeable to you; and that you were therefore aiming to lessen in my mind the horror I conceived at the idea of it. But we will finish here by mutually agreeing that neither you were capable of proposing nor I of acting on such princples.

I cannot however forbear endeavoring to give a little possible utility to this letter, by saying something on your case

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of Dunkirk. You do not see why two nations should be deemed natural enemies to each other. Nor do I, unless one or both of them are naturally mischievous and insolent. But I can see how enmities long continued, even during a peace, tend to shorten that peace, and to rekindle a war. That is, when either party, having an advantage in war, shall exact conditions in the treaty of peace, that are goading and constantly mortifying to the other. I take this to be the case of your "commissioner at Dunkirk." What would be your feelings, if France should take, and hold possession of Portsmouth, or Spain of Plymouth, after a peace, as you formerly held Calais, and now hold Gibraltar? Or on restoring your ports, should insist on having an insolent commissioner stationed there, to forbid your placing one stone upon another by way of fortification? You would probably not be very easy under such a stipulation. If therefore you desire a peace that may be *firm* and durable, think no more of such extravagant demands. It is not necessary to give my opinion farther on that point, yet I may add frankly, as this is mere private conversation between you and me, that I do think a faithful ally, especially when under obligations for such great and generous assistance as we have received, should fight as long as he is able, to prevent (as far as his continuing to fight may prevent) his friends being compelled again to suffer such an insult.

My dear friend, the true pains you are taking to restore peace, whatever may be the success, intitle you to the esteem of all good men. If your ministers really desire peace, methinks they would do well to *impower* some person to make propositions for that purpose. One or other of the parties at war must take the first step. To do this belongs properly to the wisest. America being a novice in such affairs, has no pretence to that character; and indeed, after the answer given by lord Stormont (when we proposed to him something relative to the mutual treatment of prisoners with humanity) that "*the King's ministers receives no applications from rebels, unless when they come to implore his majesty's clemency,*" it cannot

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be expected that we should hazard the exposing ourselves again to such insolence. All I can say farther at present is, that in my opinion your enemies do not aim at your destruction, and that if you propose a treaty you will find them reasonable in their demands, provided that on your side they meet with the same good dispositions. But do not dream of dividing us: you will certainly never be able to effect it.

With great regard and affection, I am ever, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

Feb. 28, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE not as yet any thing to communicate to you. I have upon many occasions recommended the road to peace in the most earnest way. I am not without hopes. I think I may venture to say that the arguments which I have stated have made an impression. I have not expected to receive the final answer from lord North till after the parliamentary arrangements of the year are settled. I am just for three or four days in the country, upon a little business, but upon a furlough, as I may say, with the knowlege of lord North, who, during the budget week, cannot possibly want to see me. I have therefore taken that week for a little private business in the country, and if lord North, should happen to wish to see me, my brother keeps watch, and is to send express for me. Public report will tell you, that on Friday last there was a division in the house, on an American question, of one hundred and ninety-four to one hundred and ninety-three. *I cannot answer for the dispositions of ministers, but in point of justice I ought to say, that I think, and as far as I can judge from the conferences which I have had, that I have found good dispositions towards peace.* I do not pledge myself, because I may be deceived; however that is my opinion; and I say thus much lest my silence should appear suspicious and create

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alienation in other parties. I think I have seen good dispositions from the first commencement of my conferences on peace. My brother sends me word, that Mr. Alexander is to return by the next mail, I therefore write this to send either by him or at least in the same packet. I have had much conversation with him, and he will tell you, that I have done my utmost to serve the cause of peace. I will conclude this with a quotation which I have applied to another person in argument respecting peace,

> Consulere patriæ, parcere afflictis, ferâ cæde abstinere,
> Iræ tempus dare, orbi quietem, seculo pacem suo,
> Hæc summa virtus,—hac cœlum petitur viâ.

God bless you and prosper our pacific endeavors. I shall probably write again to you soon.

Your affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.

From Mr. Hartley's brother, Colonel Hartley, M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

Soho Square, Feb. 28, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

AS I know how anxious my brother is to embrace every opportunity of expressing those sentiments of peace and universal philanthropy, which do you both so much honor, and of testifying his regard for yourself, I am sorry he is not returned to town before Mr. Alexander's departure. His absence from town has been occasioned by his being obliged to go into Gloucestershire for some papers relating to family concerns, and as I am sure nothing on his part will be neglected, towards forwarding the great object of peace, I regret his absence the less, because it affords me an opportunity of saying how entirely I agree with him in opinion, and particularly in the respect and esteem I bear to a person who has so ardently wished to prevent the effusion of blood, and the dreadful effects of this fatal and destructive war; a person who was, who would have been, permit me dear sir, to add, per-

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haps who is, (would the conduct of this country permit him with justice to be so) the real, the sincere friend of it.

That delusion, founded in falsehood, first made this country forget itself; its honour, and its justice, and pursue this accursed and destructive war, is certain; happy will it be if the dereliction of it at last, shall show that its continuance has not already extinguished in the breast of America every former degree of friendship and affection. That reason is beginning to return, and this country to see its errors, I hope, from *a majority of the house of commons having yesterday agreed to a resolution against the American war, and I believe almost all the people of England are against the war.* I hope this will lay the foundation of peace between the two countries, and that the horrors of war may be succeeded by lasting and general tranquillity. The event is in the hand of Providence alone, but the endeavor to contribute to such blessed purposes is not only in the power of men, but the attempt carries with it its own reward. Should success not be the consequence, the consciousness of having exerted oneself in such a cause will afford the most pleasing reflections, and make a man repose in peace upon his pillow, whatever may be the distraction and confusion around him. You, sir, feel this in the greatest degree, and may those sentiments of justice, of freedom, and liberality, which have marked your character, receive the reward they so justly merit, and by the happy return of a general peace, may such sentiments revive in each British and American breast to the mutual advantage of both countries. When I join my name to my brother's, in such a wish and in every expression of regard, esteem, and friendship towards yourself, permit me to add, though far inferior in the power of contributing to that happy event to which his abilities, industry, and attention to public concerns, make him so equal, I cannot yield even to so near and dear a relation the palm of sincerity in and anxiety for promoting such a desirable purpose.

I am with the greatest respect, dear sir, yours most sincerely,

W. H. HARTLEY.

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From Edmund Burke, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

[In answer to one requesting him to negotiate the exchange of Mr. Laurens for General Burgoyne.]

DEAR SIR,

YOUR most obliging letter demanded an early answer. It has not received the acknowlegment which was so justly due to it. But Providence has well supplied my deficiencies; and the delay of the answer has made it much more satisfactory, than at the time of my receipt of your letter I dared to promise myself it could be. *I congratulate you, as the friend of America; I trust, as not the enemy of England; I am sure, as the friend of mankind; on the resolution of the house of commons, carried by a majority of nineteen, at two o'clock this morning in a very full house.* It was *the declaration of two hundred and thirty-four; I think it was the opinion of the whole.* I trust it will lead to a speedy peace between the two branches of the English nation, perhaps to a general peace; and that our happiness may be an introduction to that of the world at large. I most sincerely congratulate you on the event. I wish I could say, that I had accomplished my commission. Difficulties remain. But as Mr. Laurens is released from his confinement, and has recovered his health tolerably, he may wait, I hope, without a great deal of inconvenience, for the final adjustment of his troublesome business. He is an exceedingly agreeable and honorable man. I am much obliged to you for the honor of his acquaintance. He speaks of you as I do; and is perfectly sensible of your warm and friendly interposition in his favor.

I have the honor to be, with the highest possible esteem and regard, dear sir, your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

London, Charles Street, Feb. 28, 1782.

General Burgoyne presents his best compliments to you, with his thanks for your obliging attentions towards him.

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From Wm. Alexander, Esq., to Dr. Franklin.

Ostend, Sunday, 9 at night, March 3, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

ALTHOUGH I expect to see you in a day or two after this comes to hand, I cannot let slip the opportunity of Mr. Moore, formerly with Mr. Williams, to inform you that the address, in consequence of the question carried on Wednesday, was carried to the king by the whole opposition on Friday; that the answer, after the common-place phrases and the repetition of the substance of the address, was declaring his disposition to comply with it; and that of pushing the war with vigour against the ancient enemies of the kingdom, until a safe and honorable peace could be obtained, which was his most earnest wish. This is the sense as delivered to me Friday evening, by a member present. I have several letters for you, which I will deliver on my arrival, and can give you a good deal of the sentiments of parties in England. I left London yesterday. You will have all our public news up to Thursday. The first payment, 15 per cent, was made on the new loan, Friday, and stock was got up at two per cent thereafter. Mr. Moore goes away just now, so have only time to subscribe myself with the most sincere esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

W. ALEXANDER.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

London, March 11, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

MR. DIGGES, who will deliver this to you, informs me, that having been applied to for the purpose of communicating with Mr. Adams, on the subject of his commission for treating of peace, he is now setting out for Amsterdam, and that he intends afterwards to go to Paris to wait upon you. I understand the occasion to have arisen, by some mention having been made in parliament by general Conway, of persons not far off having authority to treat of peace, which was

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supposed to allude to Mr. Adams, and some friends of his in London. Ministry were therefore induced to make some inquiries themselves. This is what I am informed of the matter. When the proposal was made to Mr. Digges he consulted me, I believe from motives of caution, that he might know what ground he had to stand upon; but not in the least apprised that I had been in any degree in course of corresponding with you on the subject of negotiation. As I had informed the ministry from you, that other persons besides yourself were invested with powers of treating, I have nothing to say against their consulting the several respective parties. That is their own concern. I shall at all times content myself with observing the duties of my own conduct, attending to all circumstances with circumspection, and then leaving the conduct of others to their own reasons. I presume that ministry have only done what others would have done in their situation, to procure the most ample information that the case will admit. I rest contented to act in my own sphere, and if my exertions can be applied to any public good, I shall always be ready to take my part with sincerity and zeal.

I am, my dear friend, your ever affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.

From the same to the same.

London, March 12, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

INCLOSED with this I transmit to you the public parliamentary proceeding respecting the American war. If you will compare these proceedings with some others in several of the counties of this kingdom, about two years ago, you will at once see the reason why many persons, who from principles of general and enlarged philanthropy do most certainly wish universal peace to mankind, yet seem restrained in their mode of endeavoring to obtain that object. We must accommodate our endeavors to practicabilities, in the strong hope, that if the work of peace was once begun, it would soon

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become general. Parliament having declared their sentiments by their public proceedings; a general bill will soon pass to enable administration to treat with America, and to conclude. As to the sincerity of ministry, that will be judged of by their conduct in any treaty. The first object is to procure a meeting of qualified and authorised persons. You have told me that four persons are empowered by a special commission to treat of peace. Are we to understand that each separately has power to conclude, or in what manner? The four persons whom you have mentioned are in four different parts of the world, viz. three of them in hostile states, and the fourth under circumstances very peculiar for a negotiator. When I told Mr. Laurens that his name was in the commission, I found him entirely ignorant of every circumstance relating to it. I understand that the ministry will be ready to proceed towards opening a negotiation as soon as the bill shall pass, and therefore it is necessary to consult of time, and place, and manner, and persons, on each side. The negotiation itself will speak the rest. I have been informed that some gentlemen in this country (not in administration) have lately entered into a correspondence with Mr. Adams, relating to his commission of treating for peace, and that their previous inquiries having been spoken of in public; the ministry have been induced to make some inquiry themselves from Mr. Adams, on that subject. In whatever way a fair treaty may be opened, by whomsoever or with whomsoever, I shall heartily wish good success to it for the common good and peace of mankind. I know these to be your sentiments, and I am confident that they will ever remain so, and hope that you will believe the same of me.

I am ever, your most affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.

Copy from the printed Votes of the Commons, 27th Feb. 1782.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this house, that the farther prosecution of offensive war on the continent of *North America*, for the purpose of reducing the revolted colonies to obedience by force, will be the

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means of weakening the efforts of this country against her *European* enemies, tends, under the present circumstances, dangerously to increase the mutual enmity, so fatal to the interests, both of *Great Britain* and America; and by preventing an happy reconciliation with that country, to frustrate the earnest desire, graciously expressed by his majesty, to restore the blessings of public tranquillity.

Resolved, That an humble address be presented to his majesty, that the further prosecution of offensive war on the continent of North America, tends, &c. &c.

March 4. Mr. Speaker reported to the house, that the house attended his majesty on Friday last with their address; to which his majesty was pleased to give his most gracious answer:

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

There are no objects nearer my heart than the ease, happiness, and prosperity of my people.

You may be assured that, in pursuance of your advice, I shall take such measures as shall appear to me most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies, so essential to the prosperity of both; and that my efforts shall be directed in the most effectual manner against our *European* enemies, until such a peace can be obtained, as shall consist with the interests and permanent welfare of my kingdoms.

Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

That an humble address be presented to his majesty, to return his majesty the thanks of this house, for his most gracious answer to their address, presented to his majesty on Friday last, and for the assurances his majesty has most graciously been pleased to give them, of his intention in pursuance of the advice of this house, to take such measures as shall appear most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies; and that his efforts shall be directed in the most effectual manner against our European enemies, until such a peace can be obtained as shall consist with the permanent welfare and prosperity of his kingdoms: this house being convinced that nothing can, in the present circumstances of this country, so essentially promote those great objects of his majesty's paternal care for his people, as the measures which his faithful commons have most humbly recommended to his majesty.

Ordered, That the said address be presented &c.

Resolved, That, after the solemn declaration of the opinion of this house, in their humble address, presented to his majesty on Friday last, and his majesty's assurance of his gracious intention in pursuance of their advice, to take such measures as shall appear to his majesty to be most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies, so essential to the prosperity of both, this house

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will consider as *enemies to his majesty and this country*, all those who shall endeavor to frustrate his majesty's paternal care, for the ease and happiness of his people, by advising, or by any means attempting, the farther prosecution of offensive war on the continent of *North America*, for the purpose of reducing the revolted colonies to obedience by force.

From the same to same.

London, March 21, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU will have heard, before this can reach you, that lord North declared yesterday in the house of commons, that his majesty intended to change his ministers. The house is adjourned for a few days, to give time for the formation of a new ministry. Upon this occasion therefore I must apply to you, to know whether you would wish me to transfer the late negotiation to the successors of the late ministry; in these terms; (*vide* yours to me of January 15, 1782), viz. "that you are empowered by a special commission to treat of peace whenever a negotiation for that purpose shall be opened. That it must always be understood, that it is to be in conjunction with your allies, conformable to the solemn treaties made with them. That the formal acknowlegment of the Independence of America is not made necessary." And may I add, that upon these terms you are disposed to enter into a negotiation. It is not known who will succeed the late ministry, but from the circumstances which preceded its dissolution, we are to hope that they will be disposed to enter into a negotiation of peace, upon fair and honorable terms. I have no doubt that there were some persons in the late ministry of that disposition.

I told you in my last letters to you, of the 11th and 12th instant, that I had received information, whilst I was in the course of correspondence with the ministry myself, on the subject of peace; that some part of the ministry were transmitting some communications or inquiries upon that subject with Mr. Adams, unknown to me. I had informed the ministry from you, the names of the four persons empowered to

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treat. I saw the minister upon the occasion (I should now call him the late minister). I took the liberty of giving him my opinion upon the matter itself. So far as it related personally to me, I expressed myself fully to him, that there was no occassion that such a step should have been taken unknown to me, for that I was very free to confess, that if they thought my partiality towards peace was so strong that they could drive a better bargain through another channel, I could not have any right of exclusion upon them. I relate this to you, because I would wish to have you make a corresponding application to your own case. If you should think *that my strong desire for peace,* although *most laudable and virtuous in itself, should mislead me,* and that my being as you may suppose misled, may be of any prejudice to the cause committed to your trust, I desire by no means to embarrass your free conduct, by any considerations of private or personal regard to myself. Having said thus much, I will now add, that I am not unambitious of the office of a peace maker; that I flatter myself the very page which I now am writing will bear full testimony from both sides, of the impartiality of my conduct. And I will add once more, what I have often said and repeated to each side, viz. that no fallacy or deception, knowing, or suspecting it to be such, shall ever pass through my hands.

Believe me, I sympathise most cordially and sincerely with you, in every anxiety of yours for peace. I hope things are tending (although not without rubs) yet in the main, to that end—soon! as soon as the course of human life may be expected to operate on the great scale and course of national events, or rather in the creation and establishment of a new world. I am sometimes tempted to think myself in patient expectation, the elder sage of the two; I say the elder, not the better.

Yours, &c.

D. HARTLEY.

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From T. Digges, to Dr. Franklin.

Amsterdam, March 22, 1782.

SIR,

I LEFT England a few days back, and until my conversation and some consultations with Mr. Adams, on a matter which will be mentioned to you by him, and more particularly explained in this letter, my determination was to have seen you, as well on that business as on a matter of much consequence to my private reputation. I feel the disadvantages under which I labor, when writing to you on a matter, which cannot be explained or cleared up but by personal conversation. I do not give up my intended purpose of personally speaking to you; but it being found better and more convenient to my purpose to return immediately hence to England, and from thence to Paris, in preference of going first to Paris, it must be unavoidably delayed for some days.

It would take up more than the length of a letter to explain the whole opening and progression of a matter, I am here upon, which was and is meant to be jointly communicated to you with Mr. Adams; I will therefore take the liberty to give you an abbreviation of it in as few words as I can.

About a fortnight ago a direct requisition from ministry, through lord Beauchamp, was made to Mr. R. Penn, to know if he could ascertain *that any person or persons in Europe were commissioned by Congress to treat for peace, whether they were now willing to avail themselves of such commission, and of the present sincere disposition in ministry to treat, and whether they would receive an appointed commissioner to speak for a truce, and mention a place for the meeting, &c.*

Mr. Penn's referring lord Beauchamp to me, as knowing the nature of Mr. Adams's former commission, was the sole cause of my being privy to or a party in the matter. I had various meetings with lord Beauchamp in company with Mr. Penn on the subject; the particular memorandums of which, and lord Beauchamp's statement of what the ministry wanted to obtain, together with every other circumstance relative

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to the matter, I regularly consulted Mr. Laurens and Mr. D. Hartley upon; and the result was, my taking the journey hither, and to Paris, in order to put the questions (as they are before stated from lord B. to Mr. Penn) and to bring an answer thereto. I am well convinced by lord Beauchamp's pledge of his personal honor, as well as from Mr. Hartley's telling me he knew the matter to come directly from lord North (for he visited him more than once to ascertain the fact) that it is a serious and sincere requisition from ministry, and that they will immediately take steps to open a treaty, provided I go back with assurances, that there is a power vested in Americans in Europe to treat and conclude, and that they are willing to avail themselves of such power when properly applied to.

I have stated the whole transaction to Mr. Adams, read every memorandum I had made, informed him of every circumstance I knew, and when I put the questions (as they are before stated from lord Beauchamp to Mr. Penn) he replied, "that there were certainly commissioners in Europe, of which body he was one, who had powers to treat and conclude upon peace; that he believed them willing to enter into such a treaty, provided a proper offer was made; but that no questions, now or to be made in future, could be answered by him, without previously consulting his colleagues, and afterwards acquainting the ministers of the belligerent powers thereof." Mr. Adams recommended, that any future questions might be made directly to you, for that the present, as well as any subsequent propositions, would be immediately communicated to you and monsieur de Vergennes.

His answers to my questions were nearly what I foretold and expected; and is substantially what lord Beauchamp seemed so anxious to procure. When I relate this answer to his lordship, my business will be finished in that quarter. I will here explain to you my only motive for being a messenger, from him whom I had never known nor been in company with before. It will enable me to say, I have done one favor for you,

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and I claim of you another, viz. to obtain a restoration of my papers from lord Hillsborough's office, which were, in a most illegal and unjustifiable manner, seized from me near a twelvemonth ago, and are yet withheld, notwithstanding the personal applications for them from lord Coventry, lord Nugent, and Mr. Jackson, each of whom have explained the injury, and very extraordinary mischief the want of my papers for so long a time has, and is now doing me.

On my first conversation with Mr. Adams, I had concluded to go to you, partly by his advice to do so; but as the expense of two journies, where one may serve, is of some import to me, and from supposing your answer would be substantially the same as that from Mr. Adams, I have thought it better to go back immediately to London, and then set out for Paris, with the probability of being able to bear my papers.

I will take the liberty to trouble you with another letter, if any thing occurs on my arrival in London. I am to leave this with Mr. Adams for forwardance; and for the present, I have only to beg a line acknowleging the receipt of it. If your letter is put under *a cover to Mr. Stockdale, Bookseller, Piccadilly, London*, it will the more readily get to hand.

I am, with great respect, sir, your very obedient servant,

T. DIGGES.

Ostend, 26th March.

ON my last visit to Mr. Adams, Friday evening, to explain to him the substance of the foregoing letter, and ask his forwardance of it to you, we had some farther conversation on the matter, the ultimate conclusion of which was, that it was thought better I did not send the annexed letter to you, or mention my business with him, until my going in person from England. Mr. Adams's reasons were these. That if I made the communication *then*, he should be necessiated to state the matter in a long letter to you and others of his colleagues; that the matter as it then stood was not of such importance but he could save himself the trouble of the explanation; and

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that as he recommended any future questions or applications to be made directly to you, your situation making it more convenient sooner to inform the French court thereof, he thought my letter had better be postponed, and the substance of it given in person as soon as I could possibly get from London to Paris. I acquiesced, though reluctantly, and having thought much on the matter, on my journey hither, I have at length determined to forward the foregoing letter with this postscript, and at the same time to inform Mr. Adams of my exact feelings on the matter, viz. that my wishes and intentions, which, when I left England, were to see, and make known the matter to you; that through Mr. Hartley or some other channel, you must hear that I had been at Amsterdam, and my seemingly turning my back upon you might be thought oddly of; and finally that I could not answer for carrying the inclosure from Mr. Hartley back to England, not knowing the consequence it might be of. I hope and think I have done right in this matter. The purpose for my moving in the business I went to Mr. A. upon, has, I own, been with a double view of serving myself in a matter of much consequence to me, for after delivering the explanations I carry, I can with some degree of right and a very great probability of success, claim as a gratuity for the trouble and expense I have been at, the restoration of my papers; the situation of which I have already explained to Lord Beauchamp, in order to get him to be a mover for them, and I have very little doubt, that a few days will restore them to me, and give me an opportunity to speedily speak to you on a matter which gives me much uneasiness, vexation, and pain. Excuse the hurry in which I write, for I am very near the period of embarkation. Paul Wentworth embarked this day for England, I trod on his heels chief of the way from the Hague, which he left suddenly. General Fawcett is on his road hence, to Hanover.

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John Adams, Esq., to Dr. Franklin.

The Hague, March 26, 1782.

SIR,

ONE day last week, I received at Amsterdam a card from Digges, inclosing two letters to me, from David Hartley. The card desired to see me, upon business of importance; and the letters from M. Hartley contained an assurance, that to his knowlege, the bearer came from the highest authority. I answered the card, that in the present situation of affairs here, and elsewhere, it was impossible for me to see any one from England without witness; but if he were willing to see me in presence of Mr. Thaxter, my secretary, and that I should communicate whatever he should say to me to Dr. Franklin, and the comte de Vergennes, I should wait for him at home at ten o'clock; but that I had rather he should go to Paris without seeing me, and communicate what he had to say to Dr. Franklin, whose situation enabled him to consult the court without loss of time. At ten however he came, and told me a long story about consultations with Mr. Penn, Mr. Hartley, lord Beauchamp, and at last lord North, by whom he was finally sent, to inquire of me, if I or any other had authority to treat with Great Britain of a truce. I answered, that "I came to Europe with full powers to make peace, that those powers had been announced to the public upon my arrival, and continued in force until last summer, when congress sent a new commission, containing the same powers to four persons, whom I named: that if the king of England were my father, and I the heir apparent to his throne, I could not advise him ever to think of a truce, because it would be but a real war, under a simulated appearance of tranquillity, and would end in another open and bloody war, without doing any real good to any of the parties.

He said, that "the ministry would send some person of consequence over, perhaps general Conway, but they were apprehensive that he would be ill treated or exposed." I said, "that if they resolved upon such a measure, I had rather they would

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send immediately to Dr. Franklin, because of his situation, near the French court. But there was no doubt, if they sent any respectable personage, properly authorised, who should come to treat honorably, he would be treated with great respect: but that if he came to me, I could give him no opinion upon any thing, without consulting my colleagues, and should reserve a right of communicating every thing to them, and to our allies."

He then said, that "his mission was finished: that the fact to be ascertained was simply, that there was a commission in Europe to treat and conclude: but that there was not one person in Great Britain who could affirm or prove that there was such a commission, although it had been announced in the gazettes."

I desired him, and he promised me, not to mention Mr. Laurens to the ministry without his consent, (and without informing him that it was impossible he should say any thing in the business, because he knew nothing of our instructions) because, although it was possible that his being in such a commission might induce them to release him, yet it was also possible it might render them more difficult, concerning his exchange.

The picture he gives of the situation of things in England is gloomy enough for them. The distresses of the people, and the distractions in administration and parliament, are such as may produce any effect almost that can be imagined.

The only use of all this I think is, to strike decisive strokes at New York and Charlestown. There is no position so advantageous for negotiation, as when we have all an enemy's army prisoners. I must beg the favor of you, sir, to send me, by one of the count de Vergennes's couriers, to the duc de la Vauguion, a copy in letters of your peace instructions. I have not been able to decypher one quarter part of mine. Some mistake has certainly been made.

Ten or eleven cities of Holland have declared themselves in favor of American Independence; and it is expected that

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to-day or to-morrow, this province will take the decisive resolution of admitting me to my audience. Perhaps some of the other provinces may delay it for three or four weeks. But the prince has declared, that he has no hopes of resisting the torrent, and *therefore*, that he shall not attempt it. The duc de la Vauguion has acted a very friendly and honorable part in this business, without, however, doing any ministerial act in it.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

J. ADAMS.

To Robert R. Livingston,

Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

Passy, March 30, 1782.

SIR,

THE newspapers which I send you, by this conveyance, will acquaint you, with what has since my last passed in parliament. You will there see a copy of the bill brought in by the attorney general, for empowering the king to make peace with the colonies. They still seem to flatter themselves with the idea of dividing us; and rather than name the congress, they empower him generally to treat with *any body or bodies, of men, or any person or persons, &c.* They are here likewise endeavoring to get us to treat separately from France, at the same time they are tempting France to treat separately from us, equally without the least chance of success. I have been drawn into a correspondence on this subject, which you shall have with my next. I send you a letter of Mr. Adams's just received, which shows also that they are weary of the war, and would get out of it if they knew how. They had not then received certain news of the loss of St. Christopher's, which will probably render them still more disposed to peace. I see that a bill is also passing through the house of commons for the exchange of the American prisoners, the purport of which I do not yet know.

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In my last I promised to be more particular with respect to the points you mentioned as proper to be insisted on in the treaty of peace. My ideas on those points I assure you are full as strong as yours. I did intend to have given you my reasons for some addition, and if the treaty were to be held on your side the water, I would do it: otherwise it seems on second thoughts to be unnecessary, and if my letters should be intercepted may be inconvenient. Be assured I shall not willingly give up any important right or interest of our country; and unless this campaign should afford our enemies some considerable advantage, I hope more may be obtained than is yet expected.

Our affairs generally go on well in Europe. Holland has been slow, Spain slower, but time will I hope smooth away all difficulties. Let us keep up, not only our courage, but our vigilance; and not be laid asleep by the pretended half peace the English make with us without asking our consent. We cannot be safe while they keep armies in our country.

With great esteem I have the the honor to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To J. Adams, Esq.

Passy, March 31, 1782.

SIR,

I RECEIVED yours of the 10th instant, and am of opinion with you, that the English will evacuate New York and Charleston, as the troops there, after the late resolutions of parliament, must be useless, and are necessary to defend their remaining islands, where they have not at present more than three thousand men. The prudence of this operation is so obvious, that I think they can hardly miss it; otherwise, I own, that considering their conduct for several years past, it is not reasoning consequentially to conclude they will do a thing, because the doing it is required by common sense.

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Yours of the 26th is just come to hand: I thank you for the communication of Digges's message. He has also sent me a long letter, with two from Mr. Hartley. I shall see M. de Vergennes to-morrow, and will acquaint you with every thing material that passes on the subject. But the ministry by whom Digges pretends to be sent being changed, we shall, by waiting a little, see what tone will be taken by their successors. You shall have a copy of the instructions by the next courier. I congratulate you cordially on the progress you have made among those slow people. Slow however as they are, Mr. Jay finds his[m] much slower. By an American, who goes in about ten days to Holland, I shall send you a packet of correspondence with Mr. Hartley, though it amounts to little.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be your excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, March 31, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just received your favors of March 11 and 12, forwarded to me by Mr. Digges, and another of the 21st per post. I congratulate you on the returning good disposition of your nation towards America, which appears in the resolutions of parliament, that you have sent me; and I hope the change of your ministry will be attended with salutary effects. I continue in the same sentiments expressed in my former letters; but as I am but one of five in the commission, and have no knowlege of the sentiments of the others, what has passed between us is to be considered merely as private conversation. The five persons are Messrs. Adams, Jay, Laurens, Jefferson, and myself; and in case of the death or ab-

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[m] Spain.

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sence of any, the remainder have power to act or conclude. I have not written to Mr. Laurens, having constantly expected him here, but shall write to him next post; when I shall also write more fully to you, having now only time to add, that I am ever with great esteem and affection, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, April 5, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I WROTE a few lines to you the 31st past, and promised to write more fully. On perusing again your letters of the 11th, 12th, and 21st, I do not find any notice taken of one from me, dated February 16. I therefore now send you a copy made from it in the press. The uncertainty of free transmission discourages a free communication of sentiments on these important affairs; but the inutility of discussion between persons, one of whom is not authorised, but in conjunction with others, and the other not authorised at all, as well as the obvious inconveniences that may attend such previous handling of points, that are to be considered, when we come to treat regularly, are with me a still more effectual discouragement, and determine me to waive that part of the correspondence. As to Digges, I have no confidence in him, nor in any thing he says, or may say, of his being sent by ministers. Nor will I have any communication with him, except in receiving and considering the justification of himself, which he pretends he shall be able and intends to make, for his excessive drafts on me, on account of the relief I have ordered to the prisoners, and his embezzlement of the money. You justly observe in yours of the 12th, that the first object is to procure a "meeting of qualified and authorised persons," and that you understand ministry will be ready to proceed towards opening a negotiation as soon as the bill shall pass,

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and therefore it is necessary to consult time and place, and manner, and persons, on each side." This you wrote while the old ministry existed. If the new have the same intentions, and desire a general peace, they may easily discharge Mr. Laurens from those engagements, which make his acting in the commission improper, and except Mr. Jefferson, who remains in America and is not expected here, we the commissioners of congress can easily be got together ready to meet yours, at such place as shall be agreed to by the powers at war, in order to form the treaty. God grant that there may be wisdom enough assembled to make, if possible, a peace that shall be perpetual, and that the idea of any nations being natural enemies to each other, may be abolished for the honor of human nature.

With regard to those who may be commissioned from your government, whatever personal preferences I may conceive in my own mind, it cannot become me to express them. I only wish for wise and honest men. With such, a peace may be speedily concluded. With contentious wranglers the negotiation may be drawn into length, and finally frustrated.

I am pleased to see in the votes and parliamentary speeches, and in your public papers, that in mentioning America, the word *reconciliation* is often used. It certainly means more than a mere peace. It is a sweet expression. Revolve in your mind, my dear friend, the means of bringing about this *reconciliation*. When you consider the injustice of your war with us, and the barbarous manner in which it has been carried on, the many suffering families among us from your burning of towns, scalping by savages, &c. &c., will it not appear to you, that though a cessation of the war may be a peace, it may not be a reconciliation? Will not some voluntary acts of justice, and even of kindness on your part, have excellent effects towards producing such a *reconciliation?* Can you not find means of repairing in some degree those injuries? You have in England and Ireland, twelve hundred of our people prisoners, who have for years bravely suffered all the hardships of that confinement, rather than enter into your service,

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to fight against their country Methinks you ought to glory in descendants of such virtue. What if you were to begin your measures of *reconciliation* by setting them at liberty? I know it would procure for you the liberty of an equal number of your people, even without a previous stipulation; and the confidence in our equity, with the apparent good will in the action, would give very good impressions of your change of disposition towards us. Perhaps you have no knowlege of the opinions lately conceived of your king and country, in America; the inclosed copy of a letter will make you a little acquainted with them, and convince you how impossible must be every project of bringing us again under the dominion of such a sovereign.

With great esteem, I am, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Henry Laurens, Esq.

Passy, April 12, 1782.

SIR,

I SHOULD sooner have paid my respects to you by letter, if I had not till lately expected you here, as I understood it to be your intention. Your enlargement gave me great pleasure; and I hope that the terms exacted by the late ministry, will now be relaxed; especially when they are informed that you are one of the commissioners appointed to treat of peace. Herewith I send you a copy of the commission; the purport of which you can communicate to the ministers, if you find it proper. If they are disposed to make peace with us and our allies at the same time, I will, on notice from you, send to Mr. Jay to prepare for meeting at such time and place as shall be agreed on. As to our treating separately, and quitting our present alliance, which the late ministry seemed to desire, it is impossible. Our treaties, and our instructions, as well as the honor and interest of our country forbid it. I will communicate those instructions to you as

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soon as I have the pleasure of seeing you. If you have occasion for money, please to acquaint me with the sum you desire, and I will endeavor to supply you.

With very great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Communication from the Court of France to Dr. Franklin, on the Overtures for a Separate Treaty.

A Versailles le 12 *Avril*, 1782.

J'AI mis sous les yeux de M. le compte de Vergennes, monsieur, les differentes lettres que M. Hartley vous a ecrites ainsi que votre projet de reponse; ce ministere a donné une entiere approbation à la maniere dont vous vous exprimez. Je joins ici un post-scriptum concernant Mr. Forth; M. le compte de Vergennes, qui en a pris lecture, trouve que vous pouvez sans inconvenient le transmettre à votre correspondant.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec un très sincere attachement, monsieur, votre très humble et trè obeissant serviteur,

(Signé) DE RAYNEVAL.

PS. Depuis ma lettre ecrite, monsieur, j' ai pesé de nouveau les differentes ouvertures qu'elle renferme. Selon vous l'ancien ministere Anglois desiroit sincerement une reconciliation avec nous, et il nous proposoit dans cette vue une paix separée. Tandis que vous me transmettiez ce vœu du lord North, cet ex-ministre avoit ici un emissaire, chargé de sonder le ministere François sur ses dispositions pacifiques, et de lui faire des propositions fort avantageuses. Vous pouvez juger par là, Monsieur, de l'opinion que je dois avoir des intentions du lord North et de ses collégues. Pour vous convaincre de la verité de la notion que je vous transmets, je vous confierai que l'emissaire étoit un M. Forth, et qu'on l'a chargé ici de repondre aux ministres Anglois, *que le roi de France desiroit la paix autant que le roi d'Angleterre; qu'il*

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s'y preteroit dès qu'il le pourroit avec dignité et sureté; mais qu'il importoit avant tout à S. M. T. C. de savoir si la cour de Londres étoit disposée à traiter egalement avec les alliès de la France. M. Forth est parti avec cette reponse pour Londres; mais il y a apparence qu'il ne sera arrivé qu'apres la retraite des ministres qui l'avoient envoyé. Vous pourrez, monsieur, sans aucun inconvenient faire usage de ces details, si vous le jugez à propos: ils feront connoitre au ministere actuel les principes de la cour de France, et ils le convaincront, j'espere, que le projet de nous desunir seroit aussi illusoire qu'il nous seroit injurieux. Quant au problème remis à M. Forth, je ne saurois prevoir (si les nouveaux ministres en sont instruits) de quelle maniere ils croiront devoir le resoudre; s'ils aiment la paix, comme ils l'ont persuadé à la nation Angloise et à toute l'Europe, ils ne doivent pas être embarrassés: la France leur a ouvert une voie qu'ils peuvent, selon moi, suivre sans blesser la dignité de leur maitre; s'ils ne la suivent pas, ils se flattent sans doute que le sort des armes procurera à l'Angleterre des succès qu'il leur a refusé jusqu'à présent; ce sera à la Providence à couronner ou à frustrer leurs espérances.

TRANSLATION.

Versailles, 12 *April*, 1782.

I HAVE laid before the count of Vergennes, sir, the different letters, which Mr. Hartley had written to you, as well as your proposed reply; the minister has given his entire approbation to the manner in which you have expressed yourself. I subjoin a postscript concerning Mr. Forth; the count of Vergennes, who has given it a perusal, finds that you may without impropriety transmit it to your correspondent.

I have the honor to be, sir, with most sincere attachment, your very humble and obedient servant.

(Signed) DE RAYNEVAL.

PS. Since my letter was written, sir, I have considered anew the different overtures which it embraces. In your opinion the late English minister sincerely desired a reconciliation with us, and proposed with this view a separate peace. At the time you were transmitting this wish of lord North to me, this ex-minister had employed an emissary here to sound

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the minister of France on the pacific disposition of his court, and offer very advantageous propositions. You will be able to judge from this, sir, of the opinion which I ought to have of the intention of lord North and his colleagues. To convince you of the truth of the suggestions, which I communicate, I will confide to you, that the emissary was a Mr. Forth, and thus he was charged to reply to the English minister, *that the king of France is as desirous of peace as the king of England; and that he would accede to it as soon as he could with dignity and safety; but it is a matter of the last importance for his most christian majesty to know, whether the court of London is disposed to treat on equal terms with the allies of France.* Mr. Forth has set out for London, with this answer; but it is probable he will not arrive till after the ministers, who have sent him, have retired from office. You may, sir, without the least hesitation, make use of these details, if you judge it expedient: they will make known to the minister in place the principles of the court of France, and they will convince him, I hope, that the project of disuniting us, will be as illusory as it will prove injurious to us. As to the reply sent by Mr. Forth, I cannot foresee (if the new ministers are instructed on this point) in what manner they will think they ought to consider it; if they love peace, as they have persuaded the English nation and all Europe, they need not be embarrassed: France has opened a way, in which they can, in my opinion, act without wounding the dignity of their master; if they do not adopt it, they flatter themselves without doubt, that the chance of war, wil. procure for England the success which heretofore has been denied her; it will be for Providence to crown or frustrate their hopes.

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, April 18, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

SINCE mine of the 5th, I have thought farther of the subject of our late letters. You were of opinion, that the late ministry desired *sincerely* a reconciliation with America, and with that view a separate peace with us was proposed. It happened that at the same time lord North had an emissary here to sound the French ministers with regard to peace, and to make them very advantageous propositions in case they would abandon America. You may judge from hence, my dear friend, what opinion I must have formed of the intentions of your ministers. To convince you of the truth of this, I may acquaint you that the emissary was a Mr. Forth;

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and that the answer given him to carry back to the English ministers was, *que le roi de France désiroit la paix autant que le roi d'Angleterre; qu'il i'y préteroit dès qu'il le pourroit avec dignité et surete; mais qu'il importoit avant tout à S. M. T. C. de savoir si la cour de Londres étoit disposée à traiter également avec les alliés de la France.* Mr. Forth went off with this answer for London, but probably did not arrive till after the dismission of the ministers that sent him. You may make any use of this information as you judge proper. The new ministry may see by it the principles that govern this court; and it will convince them, I hope, that the project of dividing us is as vain as it would be to us injurious. I cannot judge what they will think or do in consequence of the answer sent by Mr. Forth (if they have seen it.) If they love peace, as they have persuaded the English nation and all Europe to believe, they can be under no difficulty. France has opened a path which in my opinion they may use, without hurting the dignity of their master, or the honor of the nation. If they do not chuse it, they doubtless flatter themselves that a war may still produce successes in favor of England that have hitherto been withheld. The crowning or frustrating such hopes belongs to Divine Providence: may God send us all more wisdom!

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To John Adams, Esq.

Passy, April 13, 1782.

SIR,

INCLOSED with this I send to your excellency the packet of correspondence between Mr. Hartley and me, which I promised in my last. You will see that we held nearly the same language, which gives me pleasure.

While Mr. Hartley was making propositions to me, with the approbation or privity of lord North, to treat separately from France, that minister had an emissary here, a Mr. Forth, formerly a secretary of lord Stormont's, making pro-

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posals to induce this court to treat without us. I understand that several sacrifices were offered to be made, and among the rest Canada to be given up to France. The substance of the answer appears in my last letter to Mr. Hartley. But there is a sentence omitted in that letter, which I much liked, viz. "*that whenever the two crowns should come to treat, his most christian majesty would show how much the engagements he might enter into, were to be relied on, by his exact observance of those he already had with his present allies.*"

If you have received any thing in consequence of your answer by Digges, you will oblige me by communicating it. The ministers here were much pleased with the account given them of your interview by the ambassador.

With great respect I am, sir, your excellency's &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Soho Square, May 24, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

IT is with the greatest pleasure I take up my pen to acknowlege your remembrance of me in yours to my brother, and to thank you for those expressions of regard which I can assure you are mutual. My brother has desired me to copy some letters and papers, by way of sending you duplicates. I am particularly happy at the employment, because the greatest object of my parliamentary life has been to co-operate with him in his endeavors to put a period to this destructive war, and forward the blessed work of peace. I hope to see him again in that situation, where he can so well serve his country with credit to himself; and while I have the honor of being in parliament, my attention will be continued to promote the effects, which will naturally flow from those principles of freedom and universal philanthropy you have both so much supported. While I copy his words my own feelings and judgment are truly in unison, and I have but to add the most ardent wish that peace and happiness may crown the honest endeavors towards so desirable an end.

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I am, dear sir, with the greatest respect and esteem, yours sincerely,

W. H. HARTLEY.

Dr. Franklin.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

London, May 25, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOURS of the 13th instant I received by Mr. Oswald. I did not doubt but that the news of a general and absolute release of the American prisoners, which lord Shelburne was so good to communicate to me, in answer to that part of your letter of the 5th of April, in which you speak so pathetically of *sweet reconciliation*, would give you much sincere and heartfelt pleasure. God send that it may be the happy omen of final *reconciliation* and *durable peace*. I should be very happy to hear that good news from you, and in any way to contribute to it. Having on that subject communicated the preliminaries, dated May, 1782, to lord Shelburne, you may be assured that I have no reservations upon that head respecting America, in any circumstances or condition whatever. You know all my thoughts upon that subject, and the principles upon which they are founded, and therefore that they are not changeable.

It would give me the greatest pleasure if I could hope for any opportunity of seeing you. I could say many things which are otherwise incommunicable, and which perhaps would contribute to facilitate the road to peace. I think I see in many parts, much matter to work with, out of which a peace, honorable to all parties, and upon durable principles, might be established.—*No degrading or mortifying conditions, to shorten peace and rekindle war.* Perhaps I might not say too much if I were to add, that simply the adoption of *reason* among nations, and the mere rectification of obsolete and gothic absurdities, which carry no gratification, would afford

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a fund of remuneration to all parties, for renouncing those objects of mutual contention, which, *in the eye of reason*, are no better than creatures of passion, jealousy, and false pride. Until the principles of *reason* and equity shall be adopted in national transactions, peace will not be durable amongst men.

These are reflections general to all nations. As to the mutual concerns between Great Britain and North America, *reconciliation* is the touch-stone to prove those hearts which are without alloy. If I can be of any assistance to you in any communications or explanations conducive to peace, you may command my utmost services. Even if a French minister were to overhear such an offer, let him not take it in jealous part. Zealously and affectionately attached to my own country and to America, I am nevertheless most perfectly of accord with you, that justice and honor should be observed towards all nations. Mr. Oswald, will do me the favor, to convey this to you. I heartily wish him success in his pacific embassy.

Yours ever most affectionately, G. B.

To Dr. Franklin.[a]

Paris, June 5, 1782.

SIR,

WHILE Mr. Laurens was under confinement in England, he promised, that on condition of his being liberated upon his parole, he would apply to you for an exchange in favor of my lord Cornwallis, by a discharge of his lordship's, granted upon the surrender of his garrison at the village of York, in Virginia; and, in case of your being under any difficulty in making such exchange, he undertook to write to the congress, and to request it of that assembly; making no doubt of obtaining a favorable answer, without loss of time.

This proposal, signed by Mr. Laurens's hand, I carried and delivered, I think, in the month of December last, to his

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[a] This subject is more detailed in Vol. V. page 226, of this edition.

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majesty's then secretaries of state, which was duly attended to; and in consequence thereof, Mr. Laurens was soon after set at full liberty. And though not a prisoner under parole, yet it is to be hoped, a variation in the mode of discharge, will not be supposed of any essential difference.

And with respect to Mr. Laurens, I am satisfied he will consider himself as much interested in the success of this application, as if his own discharge had been obtained under the form as proposed by the representation which I delivered to the secretaries of state; and, I make no doubt, will sincerely join my lord Cornwallis in an acknowlegment of your favor and good offices in granting his lordship a full discharge of his parole abovementioned.

I have the honor to be, with much respect, sir, your most obedient humble servant, RICHARD OSWALD.

PS. Major Ross has got no copy of lord Cornwallis's parole. He says it was in the common form, as in like cases.

Since writing the above, I recollect I was under a mistake, as if the proposal of exchange came first from Mr. Laurens; whereas it was made by his majesty's secretaries of state to me, that Mr. Laurens should endeavor to procure the exchange of lord Cornwallis, so as to be discharged himself. Which proposal I carried to Mr. Laurens, and had from him the obligation abovementioned, upon which the mode of his discharge was settled. R. O.

To Richard Oswald, Esq.

Passy, June 6, 1782.

SIR,

I RECEIVED the letter you did me the honor of writing to me, respecting the parole of lord Cornwallis. You are acquainted with what I wrote, some time since, to Mr. Laurens. To-morrow is post day from Holland, when possibly I may receive an answer, with a paper drawn up by him for the purpose of discharging that parole, to be signed by us jointly. I suppose the staying at Paris another day will not

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be very inconvenient to major Ross; and if I do not hear to-morrow from Mr. Laurens, I will immediately, in compliance with your request, do what I can towards the liberation of lord Cornwallis.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

John Adams, Esq., to Dr. Franklin.

The Hague, June 13, 1782.

SIR,

I HAD yesterday at Amsterdam, the honor of receiving your excellency's letter of June 2d.

The discovery that Mr. Grenville's power was only to treat with France, does not surprise me at all. The British ministry are too divided among themselves, and have too formidable an opposition against them, in the king and the old ministers, and are possessed of too little of the confidence of the nation, to have courage to make concessions of any sort, especially since the news of their successes in the East and West Indies. What their vanity will end in God only knows: for my own part, I cannot see a probability, that they will ever make peace, until their finances are ruined, and such distresses brought upon them, as will work up their parties into a civil war.

I wish their enemies could by any means be persuaded to carry on the war against them in places, where they might be sure of triumphs, instead of insisting on pursuing it, where they are sure of defeat. But we must take patience, and wait for time to do, what wisdom might easily and soon do.

I have not as yet taken any engagements with the Dutch not to make peace without them; but I will take such engagements in a moment, if the Dutch will take them, and I believe they would very cheerfully. I shall not propose it, however, till I have the concurrence of the duke de la Vauguyon, who will do nothing without the instructions of his court. I would not delay it a moment from any expectation that the English

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will acknowlege our independence and make peace with us, because I have no such expectations. The permanent friendship of the Dutch may be easily obtained by the United States. That of England, never: it is gone with the days before the flood. If we ever enjoy the smallest degree of sincere friendship again from England, I am totally incapable of seeing the character of a nation or the connections of kings; which however may be the case for what I know. They have brought themselves into such a situation! Spain, Holland, America, the armed neutrality have all such pretensions and demands upon them, that where is the English minister, or member of parliament that dares to vote for the concession to them? The pretensions of France, I believe would be so moderate, that possibly they might be acceded to. But it is much to be feared that Spain, who deserves the least will demand the most: in short, the work of peace, appears so impracticable and chimerical, that I am happy in being restrained to this country, by my duty, and by this means excused from troubling my head much about it. I have a letter from America, that informed me, that Mr. Jay had refused to act in the commission for peace; but if he is on the way to Paris, as you suppose, I presume my information must be a mistake, which I am very glad of. Mr. Laurens did me the honor of a very short visit, in his way to France, but I was very sorry to learn from him, that in a letter to your excellency from Ostend, he had declined serving in the commission for peace. I had vast pleasure in his conversation, for I found him possessed of the most exact judgment concerning our enemies, and of the same noble sentiments in all things, which I saw in him in congress.

What is the system of Russia? Does she suppose that England has too many enemies upon her, and that their demands and pretensions are too high? Does she seek to embroil affairs, and to light up a general war in Europe? Is Denmark in concert with her, or any other power? Her conduct is a phenomenon. Is there any secret negotiation or intrigue on foot to form a party for England among the powers of Eu-

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rope? and to make a balance against the power of the enemies of England?

The states of Holland and several other provinces have taken a resolution against the mediation for a separate peace; and this nation seems to be well fixed in its system, and in the common cause.

My best respects and affections to my old friend, Mr. Jay, if you please. I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

J. ADAMS.

Wrote to Mr. Secretary Livingston, and Mr. Robert Morris, of which the following are Extracts.

Extract of a Letter to Robert Morris, Esq.

Passy, June 25, 1782.

FOR what relates to war and peace, I must refer you to Mr. Livingston, to whom I write fully. I will only say, that though the English a few months since seemed desirous of peace, I suspect, they now intend to draw out the negotiation into length, till they can see what this campaign will produce. I hope our people will not be deceived by fair words, but be on their guard, ready against every attempt that our insidious enemies may make upon us. I am, &c.

Wednesday, 26th. I sent away my letters, and went to see Mr. Oswald. I shewed him the draft of a letter to be addressed to him, instead of lord Shelburne, respecting the commission or public character he might hereafter be vested with; this draft was founded on lord S.'s memorandums, which Mr. Oswald had shown to me, and this letter was intended to be communicated by him to lord Shelburne. Mr. Oswald liked the mode, but rather chose that no mention should be made of his having shewn me lord S.'s memorandums, though he thought they were given him for that purpose. So I struck that out, and new-modelled the letter, which I sent him next day, as follows.

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To Robert R. Livingston, Esq.

Passy, June 28, 1782.

SIR,

IN mine of the 25th instant I omitted mentioning, that at the repeated earnest instances of Mr. Laurens, who had given such expectations to the ministry in England, when his parole or securities were discharged, as that he could not think himself at liberty, to act in public affairs, till the parole of lord Cornwallis was absolved by me, in exchange, I sent to that general, the paper, of which the inclosed is a copy; and I see by the English papers, that his lordship immediately on the receipt of it, appeared at court and has taken his seat in the house of peers, which he did not before think warrantable. My authority for doing this, appeared questionable to myself, but Mr. Laurens judged it deducible, from that respecting general Burgoyne, and by his letters to me, seemed so unhappy till it was done, that I ventured it, with a clause, however, (as you will see), reserving to congress the approbation or disallowance of it.

The enabling act is now said to be passed, but no copy of it is yet received here, so that as the bill first printed, has suffered alterations in passing through parliament, and we know not what they are, the treaty with us is not yet commenced. Mr. Grenville expects his courier in a few days, with the answer of his court to a paper given him on the part of this. That answer will probably afford us a clearer understanding of the intentions of the British ministry, which for some weeks past have appeared somewhat equivocal and uncertain. It looks as if, since their late success in the West Indies, they a little repented of the advances they had made in their declarations respecting the acknowlegment of our independence; and we have pretty good information, that some of the ministry still flatter the king with the hope of recovering his sovereignty over us on, the same terms as are now making with Ireland. However willing we might have been at the commencement of this contest to have accepted such

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conditions, be assured that we can have no safety in them at present. The king hates us most cordially. If he is once admitted to any degree of power or government among us, however limited, it will soon be extended by corruption, artifice, and force, till we are reduced to absolute subjection; and that the more easily, as by receiving him again for our *king*, we shall draw upon ourselves the contempt of all Europe, who now admire and respect us, and shall never again find a friend to assist us. There are it is said great divisions in the ministry, on other points as well as this; and those who aim at engrossing the power, flatter the king with this project of re-union; and it is said have much reliance on the operation of private agents sent into America,[o] to dispose minds there in favor of it, and to bring about a separate treaty there with general Carleton. I have not the least apprehension that congress will give into this scheme, it being inconsistent with our treaties as well as with our interest; but I think it will be well to watch these emissaries, and secure or banish immediately such as shall be found tampering and stirring up the people to call for it. The firm united resolution of France, Spain and Holland, joined with ours, not to treat of a particular but a general peace, notwithstanding the separate tempting offers to each, will in the end, give us the command of that peace. Every one of the other powers, see clearly their interest in this, and persist in that resolution: the congress I am persuaded are as clearsighted as any of them, and will not depart from the system which has been attended with so much success, and promises to make America soon both great and happy.

I have just received a letter from Mr. Laurens, dated at Lyons, on his journey into the south of France, for his health. Mr. Jay will write also by this opportunity.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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[o] See Vol. V. page 291, *note*.

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Extract of a Letter to Dr Cooper, Boston.

Passy, June 28, 1782.

OUR public affairs are in a good situation here. England having tried in vain, to make a separate peace with each of the powers she is at war with, has at length agreed to treat for a general peace with them altogether; and at Paris. If we all continue firm in the resolution not to separate, we shall command the terms. I have no doubt of this steadiness here; and though we are told that endeavors are making on your side the water, to induce America to a re-union, on the terms now granting to Ireland, and that powers are sent to general Carleton for that purpose, I am persuaded the danger of this project will appear so evident, that if offered, it will be immediately rejected. We have no safety but in our independence; with that we shall be respected, and soon become great and happy. Without it, we shall be despised, lose all our friends, and then either be cruelly oppressed by the king, who hates, and is incapable of forgiving us, or having all that nation's enemies for ours, shall sink with it.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Henry Laurens, Esq.

Passy, July 2, 1782.

SIR,

I RECEIVED the letter you did me the honor of writing to me from Lyons, the 24th past.

I wonder a little at Mr. * * * not acquainting you whether your name was in the commission or not. I begin to suspect, from various circumstances, that the British ministry, elated perhaps too much by the success of admiral Rodney, are not in earnest to treat immediately, but rather wish delay. They seem to hope that farther successes may enable them to treat more advantageously; or, as some suppose, that

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certain propositions to be made to congress by general Carleton, may render a treaty here with us unnecessary. A little bad news, which it is possible they may yet receive from the same quarter, will contribute to set them right; and then we may enter seriously upon the treaty; otherwise I conjecture it may not take place till after another campaign. Mr. Jay is arrived here. Mr. Grenville and Mr. Oswald continue here. Mr. Oswald has yet received no commission; and that of Mr. Grenville does not very clearly comprehend us according to British ideas; therefore requires explication. When I know more, you shall have farther information.

Not having an immediate answer to what I wrote you, concerning the absolution of lord Cornwallis's parole, and major Ross coming over hither from him to press it; I gave him the discharge you desired. Inclosed I send you a copy. I hear it has proved satisfactory to him; I hope it will be so to you.

Believe me to be, with great esteem, &c.

From Governor Pownall to Dr. Franklin.

Richmond Hill, July 5, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE, by my friend Mr. Hobart, sent a printed copy of the three memorials which I published on the subject of America, one addressed to the sovereigns of Europe, and two others addressed to the sovereign of Great Britain.

I hope you received my letter of May 13, 1782, forwarded by Mr. Bridgen.

As it is possible you may see Mr. Hobart, he can inform you from me, as well as of his own knowlege, of the steps we took upon the ground of your communications to him and me. "That there were persons authorised to treat of peace, and that such persons were willing to give to reasonable measures taken to that end, every assistance in their power." He can inform you also on the circumstances which attended

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those steps; and of the effect which they *missed in the direct line, as of the effect they actually have in an oblique one.* As from the beginning of this matter, of trying to bring on negociation for peace, I considered him as joined with me, in our endeavors; so I have given to him a memorandum which I made on the course of this business. He will communicate to you every thing which is not improper for a man of honor to communicate to the minister of a people at war with us: nor will he abstain from communicating any thing which that minister, wishing peace to our country, ought to be apprized of, respecting the effects of his friendly offers. He will do every thing which a man of honor ought to do, and he will do nothing that a man of honor ought not to do.

I have desired him to give a paper of queries, respecting *modes* and *terms* of settling in America, which people of this old world, and of the old country, may in future be admitted to receive. I am, not only for my friends, but personally interested, to gain information on that head: and as I wish that which will not deceive them or myself, I apply to you.

May God send peace on earth. I hope among the general blessings it will bring, it will restore me to the communication and enjoyment of my old and long valued friendship with you. May you live to see, and have health to enjoy, the blessings which I hope it may please God to make you the instrument of communicating to mankind.

I am, dear sir, your friend and very humble servant,

T. POWNALL.

P. M.

To the Honorable Mr. Hobart.

WHEN I published the memorials which I had prepared for the king, January 1, 1782, I prefixed a prefatory explanation of the publication, stating, as far as was safe so to do, the state of the *propositions of treaty*, and the circumstances attending the reception and final refusal of them.

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I could not think it proper *to name the person* with whom I had corresponded, who was authorised to treat of peace, and was willing to promote it, because I knew the insidious falsehood of *those who both hate and fear him*, would, when once his name was committed with the public, represent him in any light that might tend to diminish and destroy the trust and confidence which he so deservedly has from his employers. The memorials, therefore, speak of *persons* in the *plural*, and the preface in its communications to the public keeps close to that expressed.

I could not venture to tell the public, nor could I venture to write to this person, the fact that he *specifically and personally was excepted to*, in an *opprobrious manner*. Because, the same persons who are his enemies, having proscribed me, would have been glad of making, such my communications, an occasion of charging me with *crimes*, which, notwithstanding they have been in constant watch, they have never yet been able to do. For although I know they have whispered such in the closet, they never have dared to assert any such matter as *fact* in public. What I did, I thought right in point of honor to all concerned or interested, and I went as far as I dared venture to go in the publications which I made.

As this exception to the integrity and good faith of my correspondent, was made, upon the very first overture which I made, by all the ministers, I made a point, in all the memorials which I drew up for presentation (had the offers been admissible), of founding my offers on the integrity and good faith of this person (p. 32),[p] and in this communication to the public of marking him (preface, p. 10), as a man of honor and good faith.

I could not venture to communicate to my correspondent, much less to the public, those matters, which, though not officially communicated to me, these my enemies *would have represented*, as a betraying to *the enemy* the secrets of govern-

[p] These references are to the printed memorials of governor Pownall, published by G. Dodsley, 1782.

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ment. But it is fit, if not absolutely necessary, to make this memorandum of these things, that *the truth*, when the proper time shall come, may be known to all whom it doth concern; and it is further fit that this memorandum should be communicated to you now, as the proposing of your services was included in the offers made as a condition *sine qua non*.

Between the 6th of December, 1781, and the end of January 1782, during which time the ministry kept me in suspense, as to what resolution they would take, as to what answer they would give; or whether they would give me any answer at all; or whether they would deign to admit me and my propositions to a hearing; they act dishonorably towards me, and as I think towards my correspondent also, profited of the *fact communicated by me to them*, viz. "that there were persons authorised to treat of peace; and, that these persons were disposed to give such treaty every assistance in their power:"—and sent one person (I have been told it was Mr. Oswald), to Holland, a person, if not actually the same person, to Ghent, and a Mr. Forth to France, to try if they could not get upon the *same ground* by other ways, and *through other persons*. I have been told, and believe it, that they understood that Mr. Adams was (disgusted with the Dutch government) ready to accede to ours. Also that Mr. ——— at Ghent *was already gained*. This person they hurried off to America; and they gave instructions to general Carleton to open the ground of treaty in America. In short they tried any ground and every person, except *him* who was excepted to. And when they found that they could not get in at any door in Europe, they affected to interpret this disappointment into a fact, "That the American ministers were either not empowered or not willing to treat; that the offer was now clearly *a trap laid by a faithless and decided enemy*."

When I first made my offer, I was asked, whether I would go to Ghent or Holland, which I peremptorily refused. I was then asked, why I would not; I said, I knew nothing of the person in Holland, and as to the person at Ghent, I would have no communications there. The only person I would

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have communications with, was him that I knew had powers, whom I knew to be, notwithstanding all provocations to the contrary, a well-wisher and friend to this, whom from experience I knew to be a man of *honor and good faith*, whom I could trust, and who would trust me. This person and this line was rejected; I will not aggravate the color of facts by saying *how*.

I was informed, that during this period, they were talking with Mr. Laurens, as a more practicable man, as one who had, by acknowleging himself amenable to the laws and courts of this country, and by the act of giving bail, had by implication acknowleged (at least *de facto*), the sovereignty of Great Britain, and that *the ministers of the states* were criminals against this country. This gentleman, therefore, and his surety Mr. Oswald, were fixed upon *as the persons* through whom business might go. What was the nature of the matters of business on which they were communicated with, I do not know.

Notwithstanding the change of the ministry which took place at this period, there were some in the new composition of ministers, who partook of the spirit and influence of the old ones, and the same line of motion, and the same persons, were in like manner as before, adopted for treaty.

The memorial, January 1, 1782, (p. 22), declares specifically and definitively what was the proposition I made, viz. to open a "negotiation *for the purpose only* of settling such a truce with the Americans, as a *preliminary measure*, in order the better to treat of peace in future, either separately, or in any general congress of the powers of Europe." And this on a ground of *uti possidetis*, both as to *rights* as well as *territories* possessed, which I explained as an acknowlegment of the independence of America, with a *sauf d'honneur* to the British sovereign, and a removing of all obstacles from the way of such other sovereigns in Europe as had not yet brought themselves to acknowlege the American sovereignty. (p. 22.) I never pretended to talk of peace, much less of a *separate peace*, but definitively declared that whatever was undertaken

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"must not contravene, (Mem. Jan. 1782, p. 21), nor ever bring into question, treaties already subsisting."

On this ground it was, that upon my first overtures I proposed that while I was treating with the American ministers, Mr. Hobart might be authorised to treat with French ministers, as the properest man then in England, as living with the men of business of that court; as known to them; as knowing them; and between whom and him there was that degree and those habits of acquaintance and good opinion, which is the only soil out of which practical confidence in negotiation can grow; as one with whom I could communicate with the most perfect confidence; as one in whose hands I would repose my life and honor. I said first, that if these two lines of treaty were not instituted at the same time; and secondly, that if Mr. Hobart was not the person joined with me, I would not engage in what I had offered. This gentleman, a man of honor, brother to the earl of Buckingham, of a noble distinct landed estate of his own; a man designed by his education at the court of Vienna, under former ministers in a former reign, for the corps diplomatic, and actually having served in Russia; was also inadmissible. And they thus ended all matters in which I had made my offers.

Having thus found the ministers with whom I had communicated, impracticable towards peace, in the only line in which I thought it might be obtained, and seeing an opportunity in which I could be *principally instrumental in turning them out*, I seized the occasion, and effectuated the purpose.

General Conway had communicated to me a measure, which he was to take, of moving an address in the house of commons, to pray his majesty to relinquish the farther prosecution for peace. I stated to him the following difficulty, which might be thrown on the ground of his motion, so as to obstruct his proceeding in it. The ministers might, in general terms, and equivocal assertions say, that they were trying the ground of treaty, and that propositions towards negotiation were afloat, &c. &c., and then, if on this ground they called upon him, not at *such a juncture*, to bring forward

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measures which might obstruct their endeavors, and destroy all hopes and views of peace, he would be puzzled what to answer and how to proceed. But, that if he could have it in his power to say, That so far from opening the ground of negotiation, or being disposed to take a way to such; which offers had opened to them; that they had offers made by persons communicating with other persons *actually authorised* and willing to *treat of peace*, and had rejected those offers; I thought the ministers would not know how to oppose his motion. He said, that indeed, would be strong ground, from whence, if the ministry were attacked, he did not see how they could maintain *their ground*. I then proceeded in my communications to him, without naming my correspondent, nay absolutely refusing to name, when earnestly pressed, and told him, that I was the person to whom communications had come, "that there were in Europe *persons* authorised to treat of peace, and who had declared, that any reasonable measures to that end, should have every assistance in their power." That I had communicated this to the ministry, that after delaying all answer, from December 6, to the end of January, to offers, which I had made them on that ground, they had finally and absolutely rejected the persons and the offers. He said if this could be proved, it must turn them out. I then authorised him to make those assertions,[q] which he made in the house, which, that we might not misunderstand one another, I desired might be written down: and farther authorised him, if the ministry, by denying the assertions, should render it necessary, to name me, as ready to come and declare the same at the bar of the house of commons; and that in the mean while, he need not make any secret of me on this matter. The ministers could not, and did not venture to deny it, and were forced to quit their ground and their places.[r]

[q] Which were not those which the newspapers published.

[r] The country gentlemen tired of the war, and grown impatient for peace, left the old ministry on this question, and declared themselves the supporters of those who promised to end the war, and give peace to the country.

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Upon the change of ministers, I by letter to general Conway, made an offer of my services to open the same negotiation, which I had proposed to the late ministers, but from that hour to this day have never heard from him: and soon after found, that lord Shelburne had employed Mr. Oswald, who was Mr. Laurens's surety, and that his lordship had seen Mr. Laurens.

Richmond, July 2, 1782.

Memorandum by David Hartley, Esq.

July 8, 1782.

TO a person, who no longer thinks of American dependence, what disadvantage can there be in making its independence a fixed article (whether the treaty succeeds or no) instead of making it a first article of the treaty, and so to depend on the success of that which may miscarry. To a person indeed who looks on it as an evil, and as an evil which there are *yet some hopes* to avoid, it is a rational proceeding to provide for *all* possibilities of realizing those hopes; and the case of the treaty not succeeding is that reserved possibility. Were I treating with an enemy indeed for a barrier town (which I certainly wish to keep or to get something for), nothing I own would be so absurd as to give it up at starting, as a *fixed* article *before* the treaty, instead of making it the first article *of* a treaty, and dependent on the success of the rest. But I had rather have American independence (for one reason amongst others), because the bolder way of giving it up, will secure a greater certainty of peace, I would then be for giving it up in that bolder way; nay had I some reluctance to American independence, I should still think the smallest probability added of peace, would over-balance the whole value of a mere reserved possibility of dependence, which could only, after all, arise from the failure of the treaty.

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Note from the Marquis de la Fayette to Dr. Franklin.

Paris, July 9, 1782.

I HAVE the honor to inform you, my dear sir, that Mr. Grenville's express is arrived this morning by way of Ostend. The gentleman is gone to Versailles. I fancy he will wait upon you, and will be much obliged to you, to let me know what your opinion is. I am going to Saint Germain, but if any intelligence comes to hand, will communicate it as soon as possible.

I rest respectfully and affectionately, yours,

LA FAYETTE.

The answer.

Passy, July 9, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

MR. GRENVILLE has been with me, in his return from Versailles. He tells me that lord Rockingham being dead, lord Shelburne is appointed first lord of the treasury; and that Mr. Fox, has resigned; so that both the secretaryships are vacant. That his communication to M. de Vergennes, was only that no change was thereby made in the dispositions of that court for peace, &c., and he expects another courier with fuller instructions in a few days. As soon as I hear more I shall acquaint you with it.

I am ever, with great respect and affection, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Marquis de la Fayette.

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, July 10, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your favor of the 26th past by Mr. Young, and am indebted to you for some preceding. I do not know

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why the good work of peace, goes on so slowly on your side. Some have imagined that your ministers, since Rodney's success, are desirous of trying fortune a little farther before they conclude the war: others, that they have not a good understanding with each other. What I have just heard, seems to countenance this opinion. It is said Mr. Fox has resigned. We are ready here, on the part of America, to enter into treaty with you in concurrence with our allies; and are disposed to be very reasonable; but if your *plenipotentiary*, notwithstanding that character, is upon every proposition obliged to send a courier and wait an answer, we shall not soon see the happy conclusion. It has been suspected too, that you wait to hear the effect of some overtures sent by general Carleton for a separate peace in America. A vessel just arrived from Maryland, brings us the unanimous resolutions of their assembly, for continuing the war at all hazards, rather than violate their faith with France. This is a sample of the success to be expected from such a measure, if it has really been taken; which I hardly believe.

There is methinks a point that has been too little considered in treaties, the means of making them durable. An honest peasant from the mountains of Provence, brought me the other day a manuscript he had written on the subject, and which he could not procure permission to print. It appeared to me to have much good sense in it; and therefore I got some copies to be struck off for him to distribute where he may think fit. I send you one inclosed. This man aims at no profit from his pamphlet or his project, asks for nothing, expects nothing, and does not even desire to be known. He has acquired, he tells me, a fortune of near one hundred and fifty crowns a year (about eighteen pounds sterling) with which he is content. This you may imagine would not afford the expense of riding to Paris, so he came on foot; such was his zeal for peace, and the hope of forwarding and securing it, by communicating his ideas to great men here. His rustic and poor appearance, has prevented his access to them; or obtaining their attention; but he does not seem yet to be dis-

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couraged. I honor much the character of this *veritable philosophe.*

I thank you much for your letters, of May 1, 13, and 25, with your proposed preliminaries. It is a pleasure to me to find our sentiments so concurring on points of importance: it makes discussions as unnecessary as they might, between us, be inconvenient.

I am my dear sir, with great esteem and affection, your's ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

Extract of a Letter to B. Vaughan, Esq.

Passy, July 10, 1782.

"BY the original law of nations, war and extirpation was the punishment of injury. Humanizing by degrees, it admitted slavery, instead of death. A farther step was, the exchange of prisoners instead of slavery. Another, to respect more the property of private persons under conquest, and to be content with acquired dominion. Why should not the law of nations go on improving? Ages have intervened between its several steps; but as knowlege of late increases rapidly, why should not those steps be quickened? Why should it not be agreed to as the future law of nations, that in any war hereafter the following descriptions of men should be undisturbed, have the protection of both sides, and be permitted to follow their employments in surety; viz.

1, Cultivators of the earth, because they labor for the subsistence of mankind.

2, Fishermen, for the same reason.

3, Merchants and traders, in unarmed ships, who accommodate different nations by communicating and exchanging the neeessaries and conveniences of life.

4, Artists and mechanics, inhabiting and working in open towns.

It is hardly necessary to add, that the hospitals of enemies should be unmolested; they ought to be assisted.

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In short, I would have nobody fought with, but those who are paid for fighting. If obliged to take corn from the farmer, friend, or enemy, I would pay him for it; the same for the fish or goods of the others.

This once established, that encouragement to war which arises from a spirit of rapine, would be taken away, and peace therefore more likely to continue and be lasting.

B. FRANKLIN.

To B. Vaughan, Esq.

Passy, July 11, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

IN mine of yesterday, which went by Mr. Young, I made no mention of yours of May 11, it not being before me. I have just found it.

You speak of a "proposed dependent state of America, which you thought Mr. Oswald would begin with." As yet I have heard nothing of it. I have all along understood (perhaps I have understood more than was intended) that the point of dependence was given up, and that we are to be treated with as a free people. I am not sure that Mr. Oswald has explicitly said so, but I know that Mr. Grenville has, and that he was to make that declaration previous to the commencement of the treaty. It is now intimated to me from several quarters, that lord Shelburne's plan is to retain the sovereignty for the king, giving us otherwise an independent parliament, and a government similar to that of late intended for Ireland. If this be really his project, our negotiation for peace will not go very far, the thing is impracticable and impossible, being inconsistent with the faith we have pledged, to say nothing of the general disposition of our people. Upon the whole I should believe, that though lord Shelburne might formerly have entertained such an idea, he had probably dropped it before he sent Mr. Oswald here: your words above cited do however throw a little doubt in my mind, and have, with the intimations of others, made me less free in commu-

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nication with his lordship, whom I much esteem and honor, than I should otherwise have been. I wish therefore you would afford me what you can of eclaircissement.

This letter going by a courier will probably get to hand, long before the one (preceding in date), which went by Mr. Young, who travels on foot. I therefore inclose the copy of it which was taken in the press. You may return it to me when the other arrives.

By the return of the courier, you may oblige me, by communicating, what is fairly communicable, of the history of Mr. Fox's and lord J. Cavendish's resignation, with any other changes made or likely to be made.

With sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, your's most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Richard Oswald, Esq.

Passy, July 12, 1782.

SIR,

I INCLOSE a letter for lord Shelburne, to go by your courier, with some others of which I request his care. They may be put into the penny post. I have received a note informing me, that "some opposition given by his lordship to Mr. Fox's decided *plan*, of *unequivocally acknowleging American independence*, was one cause of that gentleman's resignation;" this from what you have told me, appears improbable. It is farther said, "that Mr. Grenville thinks Mr. Fox's resignation will be fatal to the present negotiation." This perhaps is as groundless as the former. Mr. Grenville's next courier will probably clear up matters. I did understand from him, that such an acknowlegment was intended previous to the commencement of the treaty; until it is made, and the treaty formally begun, propositions and discussions seem in consideration, to be untimely; nor can I enter into particulars without Mr. Jay, who is now ill with the influenza. My letter therefore to his lordship, is merely complimentary

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on his late appointment. I wish a continuance of your health, in that at present sickly city, being with sincere esteem, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

I send you inclosed the late resolutions of the state of Maryland; by which the general disposition of people in America, may be guessed, respecting any treaty to be proposed by general Carleton if intended, which I do not believe.

Passy, July 12, 1782.

My Lord,

MR. OSWALD informing me that he is about to despatch a courier, I embrace the opportunity of congratulating your lordship on your appointment to the treasury. It is an extension of your power to do good, and in that view, if in no other, it must increase your happiness, which I heartily wish.

Being with great and sincere respect, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Right Honorable the Earl of Shelburne.

Extract of a letter to the Marquis de la Fayette.

Passy, July 24, 1782.

«IN answer to your questions, Mr. Oswald is doing nothing, having neither powers nor instructions; and being tired of doing nothing, has despatched a courier requesting leave to return. He has I believe received no letters, since I saw you, from lord Shelburne. Mr. Grenville's return hither is I think doubtful, as he was particularly connected in friendship with Mr. Fox, but if he stays, I suppose some other will be sent, for I do not yet see sufficient reason to think they would abandon the negotiation, though from some appearances I imagine they are more intent upon dividing us, than upon making a general peace. I have heard nothing farther from

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Mr. Laurens, nor received any paper from him respecting lord Cornwallis. And since that general's letter, written after the battle of Camden, and ordering not only the confiscation of rebels' estates, but the hanging of prisoners, has been made public, I should not wonder if the congress were to disallow our absolution of his parole, and recall him to America.

With everlasting esteem and respect, I am, dear sir, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

London July 26, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU will have heard before you receive this, that Mr. Thomas Townshend is appointed secretary of state for that department to which the American correspondence belongs. He is and has been for many years one of my most intimate friends. A more honorable, and honest man, does not exist. I have been requested, in connection with him, to undertake one branch of his office relating to America, as instrumental to some necessary arrangements in the course of a negotiation for peace with America. The point which I have been requested to undertake is, the case, or rather the diversity of cases of the American refugees. I understand that in the progress of this business, I shall be referred to a correspondence with you, as matter may arise. My purpose therefore for the present is only to advertise you of this, in case you should have any preliminary matter to give or receive elucidation upon. I am very ready to undertake any matter which may be necessary or instrumental towards peace, especially in connection with my worthy friend Mr. Townshend.

You know all my principles upon American pacification, and *sweet reconciliation*. I shall always remain in the same. But the delegation of a single point to me, such as the case of the refugees, does not entitle me to advise upon the great outlines or principles of such pacific negotiations. I shall re-

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tain my full reservation in such points as events may justify. My personal motive for saying this to you, is obvious. But in point of justice to those who have at present the direction of public measures in this country, I must request, that this caution of mine may be accepted only as personal to myself, and not as inferential upon the conduct of others, where I am not a party. Having taken a zealous part in the principles and negotiations of peace, I wish to stand clear from any collateral constructions which might affect myself, and at the same time not to impose any collateral or inferential constructions upon others.

God prosper the work of peace and *good will* (as the means of peace) among men.

I am ever your affectionate friend,

D. HARTLEY.

From Lord Grantham to Dr. Franklin.

Whitehall, July 26, 1782.

SIR,

AS the first object of my wishes is to contribute to the establishment of an honorable and lasting peace, I address myself to you without ceremony, upon the conviction that you agree with me in this principle. If I was not convinced, that it was also the real system of the ministers of this country, I should not now be co-operating with them. The step they had already taken, in sending Mr. Grenville to Paris, is a proof of their intentions, and as that gentleman does not return to his station there, I trust that the immediate appointment of a person to succeed him, will testify my agreement to the principles upon which he was employed. I therefore beg leave to recommend Mr. Fitzherbert to your acquaintance, who has the king's commands to repair to Paris.

As I have not the advantage of being known to you, I can claim no pretence for my application to you, but my public situation, and my desire to merit your confidence upon a

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subject of so much importance, as a pacification between the parties engaged in a calamitous war.

I have the honor to be with great regard, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

GRANTHAM.

From Lord Shelburne, to Dr. Franklin.

Shelburne House, July 27, 1782.

SIR,

I AM much obliged by the honor of your letter of the 12th instant. You do me most acceptable justice, in supposing my happiness intimately connected with that of mankind, and I can with truth assure you, it will give me great satisfaction, in every situation, to merit the continuance of your good opinion.

I have the honor to be, with very sincere regard and esteem, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

SHELBURNE.

To Mr. Oswald.

Passy, July 28, 1782. 8 *o'clock.*

SIR,

I HAVE but this minute had an opportunity, by the departure of my company, of perusing the letters put into my hands this afternoon; and I return them directly without waiting till our interview to-morrow morning, because I would not give a moment's delay to the delivery of those directed to other persons. The situation of captain Asgill and his family afflicts me: but I do not see what can be done by any one here to relieve them. It cannot be supposed that general Washington has the least desire of taking the life of that gentleman. His aim is to obtain the punishment, committed on a prisoner in cold blood by captain Lippincott. If the English refuse to deliver up or punish this murderer, it is saying that they chuse to preserve him rather than captain

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Asgill. It seems to me, therefore, that the application should be made to the English ministers, for positive orders, directing general Carleton to deliver up Lippincott, which orders being obtained, should be despatched immediately by a swift-sailing vessel. I do not think any other means can produce the effect desired. The cruel murders of this kind, committed by the English on our people, since the commencement of the war, are innumerable. The congress and their generals, to satisfy the people, have often threatened retaliation; but have always hitherto forborne to execute it; and they have often been told insultingly by their enemies, that this forbearance did not proceed from humanity, but fear. General Greene, though he solemnly and publicly promised it in a proclamation, never made any retaliation for the murder of colonel Haynes, and many others in Carolina; and the people, who now think, that if he had fulfilled his promise, this crime would not have been committed, clamour so loudly, that I doubt general Washington cannot well refuse, what appears to them so just and necessary for their common security. I am persuaded, nothing I could say to him on the occasion, would have the least effect in changing his determination. Excuse me then, if I presume to advise the despatching a courier immediately to London, proposing to the consideration of ministers the sending such orders to general Carleton directly. They would have an excellent effect in other views. The post goes to-morrow morning at ten o'clock; but as nine days have been spent in bringing the letters here by that conveyance, an express is preferable.

With sincere esteem I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To M. le Comte de Vergennes.

Passy, August 8, 1782.

SIR,

YESTERDAY Mr. Oswald communicated to Mr. Jay and me, a paper he had just received from his court, being a

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copy of the king's order to the attorney or solicitor-general, to prepare a commission to pass the great seal, appointing him to treat with us, &c., and he showed us a letter from Mr. secretary Townshend, which expresses his concern, that the commission itself could not be sent by this courier, the officers who were to expedite it being in the country, which would occasion a delay of eight or ten days; but that its being then sent might be depended on, and it was hoped the treaty might, in the mean time, be proceeded on. Mr. Oswald left with me a copy of the paper, which I inclose for your excellency's consideration, and am, with great respect, sir, your excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Answer.

A. M. FRANKLIN,

JE reçois, monsieur, la lettre de ce jour dont vous m'avez honoré et la copie du pouvoir que M. Oswald vous a communiqué. La forme dans la quelle il est conçu n'étant pas celle qui est usitée, je ne puis pas arrêter mon opinion a une première vue, je vais l'examiner avec la plus grande attention, et si vous voulez bien vous rendre ici Samedi matin, je pourrai en conférer avec vous, et avec M. Jay s'il lui étoit commode de vous accompagner.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, très-parfaitement, monsieur, votre très humble, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

Versailles, le 8 Août, 1782.

TRANSLATION.

Answer.

To Mr. FRANKLIN,

I HAVE received, sir, the letter of this day, with which you have honored me, and the copy of the power which Mr. Oswald has communicated to you. The form in which it appears is not that which is usual on similar occasions, but it has not prevented me from forming my opinion in the first instance. I have bestowed the greatest attention on it, and if

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you will be so good as to favor me with a visit on Saturday morning, I shall confer with you and Mr. Jay, if it will be convenient for him to accompany you.

I have the honor to be, most sincerely, sir, your most humble servant,

DE VERGENNES.

Versailles, 8th August, 1782.

Extract of a Letter to Robert R. Livingston, Esq.

Passy, August 12, 1782.

THE second changes in the ministry of England, have occasioned or have afforded pretences for various delays in the negotiation for peace. Mr. Grenville had two successive imperfect commissions. He was at length recalled, and Mr. Fitzherbert is now arrived to replace him, with a commission in due form to treat with France, Spain, and Holland. Mr. Oswald, who is here, is informed, that a commission impowering him to treat with the commissioners of congress will pass the seals, and be sent him in a few days. 'Till it arrives, this court will not proceed in its own negotiation. I send the enabling act, as it is called. Mr. Jay will acquaint you with what passes between him and the Spanish ambassador, respecting the proposed treaty with Spain. I will only mention, that my conjecture of that court's design, to coop us up within the Alleghany mountains, is now manifested: I hope congress will insist on the Mississippi as the boundary, and the free navigation of the river, from which they would entirely exclude us.

B. FRANKLIN.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr Franklin.

London, August 16, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOURS I received by major Young, together with the work of your *veritable philosophe*, which is full of humanity. I was not before that, at a loss where I should have looked for my *veritable philosophe* in the present actual scene of public politics. Your honest, anxious, and unremitted endeavors

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towards the re-establishment of peace, must endear you to your own country, and to all mankind. Whatever may have been transacting in America, (if it can be possible that the suspicions which you mention should become true) viz., to tamper with America for a breach of faith, of which some suspicions seem to be thrown out by the provinces of Maryland and Philadelphia, I can give the strongest testimonies of the constant honor and good faith of your conduct and correspondencies; and my letters to you will bear me equal testimony, that I have never thrown out any dishonorable suggestions to you. When the proposed congress of your *veritable philosophe* shall meet, neither of us need fear its censures, upon the strictest examination of our correspondence. We will claim the poet's character of the sincere statesman,

"Who knew no thought, but what the world might hear."

In times of suspicion, it must be some satisfaction to both of us to know, that no line or word has ever passed between us, but what the governments of Great Britain, France, and America might freely peruse as the words of good faith, peace, and *sweet reconciliation.*

The resolutions of Maryland and Philadelphia, together with the slow proceeding of our *plenipotentiaries,* and even the doubt suggested, whether they may not be waiting for events in America, give me much concern. Not being informed to a certainty of the state of the negotiation, I have declined any concern with the ministry upon the subject of the refugees, &c. My assistance cannot be indispensable upon that topic, but I deem it indispensable to myself not to be committed in unknown ground, which from the points above mentioned, must appear dubious to me. These are the reasons which I gave to the minister for declining. I must at the same time give him the justice of the most absolute and unlimited professions of sincerity for peace. Whatever divisions there may have been, as you say, suspected in the cabinet, there are some of his colleagues still remaining, in whom I have the greatest confidence for sincerity and good intentions.

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The public prints of this country have stated what are called *shades* of difference as to the mode. Those opinions which are imputed to Mr Fox, are certainly most suitable to my opinions. I am free to confess to you, that my wishes would have been, to have taken the most decisive ground relating to independence, &c. immediately from the 27th of March last, viz., the accession of the change of ministry. But I agree with you in sentiment; viz., to concur with all the good that offers, when we cannot obtain all the good that we might wish. The situation of my sentiments at present is, an unbiassed neutrality of expectation, as events may justify.

I shall be obliged to you for the earliest communications of any public events in America which may come to Europe, with any public resolutions of congress or provinces, &c., and all memorials or negotiations which may pass between the parties in America. I am very anxious to have the earliest informations to form my opinions upon, and to be prepared accordingly. My utmost endeavors will always be exerted to the blessed work of peace.

I am ever, your affectionate

D. HARTLEY.

To J. Jay, Esq.

Passy, Sept. 4, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

MR. OSWALD's courier being returned, with directions to him to make the independence of America the first article in the treaty, I would wait on you if I could, to discourse on the subject; but as I cannot, I wish to see you here this evening, if not inconvenient to you.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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Letter and official Communication from Richard Oswald, Esq., to Dr. Franklin.

SIR,

IN consequence of the notice I have just now had from Mr. Jay, of your desire of an extract from my last letter from the secretary of state, regarding the proposed treaty on the subject of American affairs, and my authority in relation thereto; I take the liberty to send the same inclosed, which, together with the powers contained in the commission which I had the honor of laying before you and Mr. Jay, I am hopeful will satisfy you of the willingness and sincere desire of his majesty to give you entire content on that important subject.

This extract I would have sent before now, if I had thought you wished to have it before I had the honor of waiting on you myself; which was only delayed until I should be informed by Mr. Jay, that you was well enough to see me upon business.

I heartily wish you a recovery of your health, and am, with sincere esteem and regard, sir, your most obedient humble servant, RICHARD OSWALD.

Paris, September 5, 1782.

Extract of a Letter to Richard Oswald, Esq., from the Right Honorable Thomas Townshend, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, dated

Whitehall, September 1, 1782.

SIR,

"I HAVE received and laid before the king, your letters of the 17th, 18th, and 21st ult.; and I am commanded to signify to you his majesty's approbation of your conduct in communicating to the American commissioners the fourth article of your instructions; which could not but convince them, that the negotiation for peace, and the cession of independence to the Thirteen United Colonies, were intended to be carried on and concluded with the commissioners in Europe.

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Those gentlemen having expressed their satisfaction concerning that article, it is hoped they will not entertain a doubt of his majesty's determination to exercise, in the fullest extent, the powers with which the act of parliament hath invested him, by granting to America, full, complete, and unconditional independence, in the most explicit manner, as an article of treaty.

RICHARD OSWALD."

Paris, Sept. 5, 1782.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

Hotel de Yorck, Sept. 7, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I BEG of you not to forget your letter to Mr. Fox. The purpose of my journey to England will be, to do the best in my power for things and persons, and particularly for my friends. If you have any other private letters, send them to me; I will deliver them. I hope likewise to be personally charged with the answers. I am better this morning, and shall certainly set out very early to-morrow morning. Pray give my best compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Jay, and Mr. Temple Franklin. I wish you all health till I have the pleasure of seeing you again.

Your ever most affectionate friend,

D. HARTLEY.

To Richard Oswald, Esq.

Passy, September 8, 1782.

SIR,

I HAVE received the honor of yours, dated the 5th instant, inclosing an extract of a letter to your excellency, from the right honorable Thomas Townshend, one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state, wherein your conduct in communicating to us the fourth article of your instructions ap-

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pears to have been approved by his majesty. I suppose therefore that there is no impropriety in my requesting a copy of that instruction; and if you see none, I wish to receive it from you, hoping it may be of use in removing some of the difficulties that obstruct our proceeding.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, sir, your excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Copy of the fourth article of his majesty's instructions to Richard Oswald, for his government in treating with the commissioners of the Thirteen United Colonies of America for a truce or peace, the said instructions being dated the 31st day of July, 1782, viz.

"4th Article. In case you find the American commissioners are not at liberty to treat on any terms short of independence, you are to declare to them, that you have authority to make that concession. Our ardent wish for peace disposing us to purchase it at the price of acceding to the complete independence of the Thirteen Colonies, namely, New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in North America."

RICHARD OSWALD.

Passy, 9th Sept., 1782.

To the Earl of Grantham.

Passy, Sept. 11, 1782.

My Lord,

A LONG and severe indisposition has delayed my acknowleging the receipt of the letter your lordship did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Fitzherbert.

You do me justice in believing that I agree with you in earnestly wishing the establishment of an honorable and last-

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ing peace; and I am happy to be assured by your lordship that it is the system of the ministers with whom you are co-operating. I know it to be the sincere desire of the United States, and with such dispositions on both sides, there is reason to hope, that the good work in its progress will meet with little difficulty. A small one has occurred in the commencement, with which Mr. Oswald will acquaint you. I flatter myself that means will be found on your part for removing it; and my best endeavors in removing subsequent ones (if any should arise) may be relied on.

I had the honor of being known to your lordship's father. On several occasions he manifested a regard for me, and a confidence in me. I shall be happy if my conduct in the present important business may procure me the same rank in the esteem of his worthy successor.

I am, with sincere respect, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, Sept. 17, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

SINCE those acknowleged in my last, I have received your several favors of August 16, 20, and 26. I have been a long time afflicted with the gravel and gout, which have much indisposed me for writing. I am even now in pain, but will not longer delay some answer.

I did not perfectly comprehend the nature of your appointment respecting the refugees, and I supposed you would in a subsequent letter explain it. But, as I now find you have declined the service, such explanation is become unnecessary.

I did receive the paper you inquire about, intitled Preliminaries, and dated May, 1782, but it was from you, and I know nothing of their having been communicated to this court. The third proposition, "that in case the negotiation between Great Britain, and the allies of America, should

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not succeed, but the war continue between them, America should act and be treated as a neutral nation," appeared at first sight inadmissible, being contrary to our treaty. The truce too, seems not to have been desired by any of the parties.

With unalterable esteem and affection, I am, my dear friend, ever yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

Extract of a Letter to Robert R. Livingston, Esq.

Passy, Sept. 26, 1782.

"THE negotiations for peace have hitherto amounted to little more than mutual professions of sincere desires, &c.; being obstructed by the want of due form in the English commissions appointing their plenipotentiaries. The objections made to those for treating with France, Spain, and Holland, were first removed; and by the inclosed[a] it seems that our objections to that for treating with us will now be removed also; so that we expect to begin in a few days our negotiations. But there are so many interests to be considered and settled,

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[a] The commission here following.

Commission under the Great Seal of Great Britain, empowering Richard Oswald, Esq., to treat with the Commissioners of the Thirteen United States of America.

GEORGE the Third, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, and so forth,—To our trusty and well-beloved Richard Oswald, of our city of London, esq., greeting: Whereas, by virtue of an act passed in the last session of parliament, intituled an act to enable his majesty to conclude a peace or truce with certain colonies in North America therein mentioned, it is recited, that it is essential to the interest, welfare, and prosperity of Great Britain, and the colonies or plantations of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, in North America, that peace, intercourse, trade, and commerce should be restored between them; therefore, and for a full manifestation of our earnest wish and desire, and of that of our parliament, to put an end to the calamities of war, it is enacted, that it should

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in a peace between five different nations, that it will be well not to flatter ourselves with a very speedy conclusion."

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and might be lawful for us, to treat, consult of, agree, and conclude with any commissioner or commissioners, named or to be named by the said colonies or plantations, or any of them respectively, or with any body or bodies corporate or politic, or any assembly or assemblies, or description of men, or any person or persons whatsoever, a peace or a truce with the said colonies or plantations, or any of them, or any part or parts thereof, any law, act, or acts of parliament, matter or thing to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding; Now know ye, that we, reposing especial trust in your wisdom, loyalty, diligence, and circumspection, in the management of the affairs to be hereby committed to your charge, have nominated and appointed, constituted and assigned, and by these presents do nominate and appoint, constitute, and assign, you the said Richard Oswald, to be our commissioner in that behalf, to use and exercise all and every the powers and authorities hereby entrusted and committed to you the said Richard Oswald, and to do, perform, and execute all other matters and things hereby enjoined and committed to your care, during our will and no longer, according to the tenor of these our letters patent; And it is our royal will and pleasure, and we do hereby authorise, empower, and require you the said Richard Oswald, to treat, consult of, and conclude, with any commissioners or persons vested with equal powers, by and on the part of the Thirteen United States of America, viz. New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in North America, a peace or a truce with the said Thirteen United States, any law, act or acts of parliament, matter or thing to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding. And it is our further will and pleasure, that every regulation, provision, matter, or thing, which shall have been agreed upon between you the said Richard Oswald and such commissioners or persons as aforesaid, with whom you shall have judged meet and sufficient to enter into such agreement, shall be fully and distinctly set forth in writing, and authenticated by your hand and seal on one side, and by the hands and seals of such commissioners or persons on the other, and such instrument so authenticated, shall be by you transmitted to us, through one of our principal secretaries of state. And it is our farther will and pleasure, that you the said Richard Oswald, shall promise and engage for us, and in our royal name and word, that every regulation, provision, matter, or thing, which may be agreed to, and concluded by you our said commissioner, shall be ratified and confirmed by us, in the fullest manner and extent; and that we will not suffer them to be violated or counteracted, either in

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David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

Bath, October 4, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND, - -

I ONLY write one line to you to let you know that I am not forgetful of you, or of our common concerns. I have not heard any thing from the ministry yet: I believe it is a *kind* of vacation with them before the meeting of parliament. I have told you of a proposition which I have had some thoughts to make as a kind of co-partnership in commerce. I send you a purposed temporary convention, which I have drawn

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whole or in part, by any person whatsoever. And we do hereby require and command all our officers, civil and military, and all others our loving subjects whatsoever, to be aiding and assisting unto you the said Richard Oswald, in the execution of this our commission, and of the powers and authorities herein contained. Provided always, and we do hereby declare and ordain, that the several offices, powers, and authorities hereby granted, shall cease, determine, and become utterly null and void, on the first day of July, which shall be in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three, although we shall not otherwise in the mean time have revoked and determined the same. And whereas, in and by your commission and letters patent, under our great seal of Great Britain, bearing date the seventh day of August last, we nominated and appointed, constituted and assigned, you the said Richard Oswald, to be our commissioner, to treat, consult of, agree and conclude, with any commissioner or commissioners, named or to be named by certain colonies or plantations therein specified, a peace or truce with the said colonies or plantations. Now know ye, that we have revoked and determined, and by these presents do revoke and determine our said commission and letters patent, and all and every power, article, and thing, therein contained. In witness whereof, we have caused these our letters to be made patent.

Witness our self at Westminster, the twenty-first day of September, nd the twenty-second year of our reign.

By the king himself.

YORKE.

Paris, Oct. 1, 1782. I certify, that the adjoining is a true copy of the commission of which it purports to be a copy, and which has been shewn to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay.

RICHARD OSWALD,
The commissioner therein named.

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up. You are to consider it only as one I recommend. The words underlined are grafted upon the proposition of my memorial, dated May 19, 1773. You will see the principle which I have in my thoughts to extend for the purpose of restoring our ancient co-partnership generally. I cannot tell you what event things may take, but my thoughts are always employed in endeavouring to arrange that system upon which the *China Vase*, lately shattered, may be cemented together, upon principles of compact and connection, instead of dependence. I have met with a sentiment in this country which gives some alarm, viz. lest the unity of government in America should be uncertain, and the states reject the authority of congress. Some passages in general Washington's letter have given weight to these doubts. I don't hear of any tendency to this opinion; *that the American States will break to pieces, and then we may still conquer them.* I believe all that folly is extinguished. But many serious and well disposed persons are alarmed lest *this should be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the union, and annihilating the cement of confederation* (*vide* Washington's letter), and that Great Britain should thereby lose her best and wisest hope of being reconnected with the American states *unitedly.* I should for one, think it the greatest misfortune. Pray give me some opinion upon this. You see there is likewise another turn which may be given to this sentiment by intemperate and disappointed people, who may indulge a passionate revenge for their own disappointments, by endeavoring to excite general distrust, discord, and dis-union. I wish to be prepared and guarded at all points. I beg my best compliments to your colleagues; be so good as to show this letter to them. I beg particularly my condolence (and I hope congratulation) to Mr. Adams; I hear that he has been very dangerously ill, but that he is again recovered. I hope the latter part is true, and that we shall all survive to set our hands to some future compacts of common interest, and common affection, between our two countries.

Your ever affectionate D. HARTLEY.

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To Robert R. Livingston, Esq.

Passy, Oct. 14, 1782.

SIR,

I HAVE but just received information of this opportunity, and have only time allowed to write a few lines.

In my last of the 26th past, I mentioned that the negotiations for peace had been obstructed by the want of due form in the English commissions, appointing their plenipotentiaries. In that for treating with us, the mentioning our states by their public name had been avoided, which we objecting to, another is come, of which I send you a copy inclosed. We have now made several preliminary propositions, which the English minister, Mr. Oswald, has approved, and sent to his court.[t] He thinks they will be approved there, but I have some doubts. In a few days, however, the answer expected will determine. By the first of these articles, the king of Great Britain renounces, for himself and successor, all claim and pretension to dominion or territory within the Thirteen United States; and the boundaries are described as in our instructions; except that the line between Nova Scotia and New England is to be settled by commissioners after the peace. By another article, the fishery in the American seas is to be freely exercised by the Americans, wherever they might formerly exercise it while united with Great Britain. By another, the citizens and subjects of each nation, are to enjoy the same protection and privileges in each other's ports and countries respecting commerce, duties, &c., that are enjoyed by native subjects. The articles are drawn up very fully by Mr. Jay, who I suppose sends you a copy; if not, it will go by the next opportunity. If these articles are agreed to, I apprehend little difficulty in the rest. Something has been mentioned about the refugees and English debts, but not insisted on, as we declared at once, that whatever confiscations had been made in America, being in virtue of the laws of

[t] See Vol. V. p. 191, of this edition.

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particular states, the congress had no authority to repeal those laws, and therefore could give us none to stipulate for such repeal.

The ministry here have been induced to send over M. de Rayneval, secretary of the council, to converse with lord Shelburne, and endeavor to form by that means a more perfect judgment of what was to be expected from the negotiation. He was five or six days in England, saw all the ministers, and returned quite satisfied, that they are sincerely desirous of peace; so that the negotiations now go on with some prospect of success. But the court and people of England are very changeable. A little turn of fortune in their favor sometimes turns their heads; and I shall not think a speedy peace to be depended on, till I see the treaties signed.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To John Adams, Esq., Minister Plenipotentiary, &c.

Passy, Oct. 15, 1782.

SIR,

A LONG and painful illness has prevented my corresponding with your excellency regularly.

Mr. Jay has, I believe, acquainted you with the obstructions our peace negotiations have met with, and that they are at length removed. By the next courier, expected from London, we may be able perhaps to form some judgment of the probability of success, so far as relates to our part of the peace. How likely the other powers are to settle their pretensions, I cannot yet learn. In the meantime, America is gradually growing more easy, by the enemy's evacuation of their posts; as you will see by some intelligence I inclose.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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From T. Townshend, Esq., to Dr. Franklin.

Whitehall, Oct. 23, 1782.

SIR,

AS Mr. Strachey is going from hence to Paris, with some particulars for Mr. Oswald, which were not easily to be explained in writing, I take the liberty of introducing him to your acquaintance, though I am not sure, that he is not already a little known to you. The confidential situation in which he stands with me, makes me particularly desirous of presenting him to you.

I believe, sir, I am enough known to you, for you to believe me, when I say, that there has not been from the beginning a single person more averse to the unhappy war, or who wishes more earnestly than I do, for a return of peace and mutual amity between Great Britain and America.

I am, with great regard, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

T. TOWNSHEND.

To Thomas Townshend, Esq.,

One of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

Passy, Nov. 4, 1782.

SIR,

I RECEIVED the letter you did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Strachey; and was much pleased with the opportunity it gave me of renewing and increasing my acquaintance with a gentleman of so amiable and deserving a character.

I am sensible you have ever been averse to the measures that brought on this unhappy war; I have therefore no doubt of the sincerity of your wishes for a return of peace. Mine are equally earnest. Nothing therefore except the beginning of the war, has given me more concern than to learn at the conclusion of our conferences, that it is not likely to be soon ended. Be assured no endeavors on my part would be

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wanting to remove any difficulties that may have arisen, or even if a peace were made, to procure afterwards any changes in the treaty that might tend to render it more perfect, and the peace more durable. But we who are here at so great a distance from our constituents, have not the possibility of obtaining in a few days fresh instructions, as is the case with your negotiators, and are therefore obliged to insist on what is conformable to those we have, and at the same time appears to us just and reasonable.

With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To the Ministers Plenipotentiary from the United States.

Paris, Nov. 5, 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

KNOWING the expectation of the king's ministers, that full indemnity shall be provided for the whole body of refugees, either by a restitution of their property, or by some stipulated compensation for their losses, and being confident as I have repeatedly assured you, that your refusal upon this point will be the great obstacle to a conclusion and ratification of that peace which is meant as a solid, perfect, permanent reconciliation and re-union between Great Britain and America, I am unwilling to leave Paris without once more submitting the matter to your consideration. It affects equally, in my opinion, the honor and humanity of your country, and of ours. How far you will be justified in risking every favorite object of America, by contending against those principles, is for you to determine. Independence and more than a reasonable possession of territory seem to be within your reach. Will you suffer them to be outweighed by the gratification of resentment against individuals. I venture to assert that such a conduct hath no parallel in the history of civilized nations.

I am under the necessity of setting out by two o'clock today; if the time is too short for your re-consideration, and

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final determination of this important point, I shall hope that you will enable Mr. Oswald to despatch a messenger after me, who may be with me before morning at Chantilly, where I propose sleeping to night, or who may overtake me before I arrive in London, with a satisfactory answer to this letter.

I have the honor to be, gentlemen, yours, &c.

W. STRACHEY.

To W. Strachey, Esq.

Paris, Nov. 6, 1782.

SIR,

WE have been honored with your favor of the 5th instant, and as our answer to a letter we received from Mr. Oswald on the same subject, contains our unanimous sentiments respecting it, we take the liberty of referring you to the inclosed copy of that answer.[a]

We have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient, &c.

B. Vaughan, Esq., to Dr. Franklin.

Paris, Nov. 27, 1782.

MY DEAREST SIR,

I AM so agitated with the present crisis, that I cannot help writing to you, to beseech you again and again to meditate upon some mild expedient about the refugees, or to give a favorable ear, and helping hand to such as may turn up.

Both sides agree, that the matter of expense is nothing; and the matter of honor in my opinion is least to *that* side, which has most sense and most justice on its side. It seems to me, that the matter of present *peace*, and *future happiness*, are the only points of true concern to either.

If I can judge of favorable moments, the present is of all others most favorable to our views of *reconciliation*. We have liberal American commissioners at Paris, a liberal Eng-

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[a] See Vol. V. p. 194 to 202, of this edition.

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lish commissioner, and a liberal first minister for England. All these circumstances may vanish to-morrow, if this treaty blows over.

If you wanted to break off your treaty, I am perfectly sensible that you could not do it on grounds in which America would more join with you, than this of the refugees. On the other hand, if *England* wanted to break, she could not wish for better ground on *her* side. You do not break; and therefore I conclude you *both* sincere. But in this way, I see the treaty is likely of *itself* to break. I pray then, my dearest, dearest sir, that you would a little take this matter to heart.

If the refugees are not silenced, you must be sensible what constant prompters to evil measures you leave us, what perpetual sources of bad information. If the minister is able, on the other hand, to hold up his head on this one point, you must see how much easier it will be for you both to carry on the great work of re-union, as far as relates to prince and people. We are not well informed about the deeds of the refugees in England; and we can only now be well informed by publications, that would do irreparable mischief.

Besides, you are the most magnanimous nation; and can excuse things to your people, which *we* can less excuse to *ours*. Not to mention, that when congress sent you their last resolutions, she was not aware that you would be so near a settlement as you are at present. To judge which is the hardest task, yours, or England's, put yourself in lord Shelburne's place. The only marks of confidence shown him at Paris, are such as he *dares not name;* and the only marks promised him, are *future* national ones. England has given much ground of confidence to America. In my opinion, England will do HER business in the way of RECONCILIATION, very much in proportion, as you do your business generously at the present peace. England is to be won, as well as America is to be won; and I beg you would think with yourself and your colleagues about the means. Excuse this freedom, my dearest sir; it is the result of a very warm heart, that thinks

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a little property *nothing*, to much happiness. I do not, however, ask you to do a dishonorable thing, but simply to save England; and to give our English ministry the means of saying, on the 5th December, we have done *more* than the last ministry have done. I hope you will not think this zeal persecution; for I shall not mention this subject to you again, of my own accord.

I know you have justice on your side; I know you may talk of precedents; but there is such a thing as forgiveness, as generosity, and as a manly policy, that can share a small *loss*, rather than miss a greater *good*.

Yours, my dearest sir, most devotedly, most gratefully, most affectionately,

B. VAUGHAN.

To M. le Comte de Vergennes.

Passy, Nov. 29, 1782.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acquaint your excellency, that the commissioners of the United States have agreed with Mr. Oswald on the preliminary articles of the peace *between* those states and Great Britain. To-morrow I hope we shall be able to communicate to your excellency a copy of them.[v]

With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Copy of a Passport given to the ship Washington, to carry over the Preliminary Articles.

(L. S.) GEORGE R.

GEORGE the Third, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all admirals, vice-admirals, captains, commanders of our

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[v] These articles and a separate article will be found in p. 179 to 184, Vol. V. of this edition.

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ships of war or privateers, governors of our forts and castles, customhouse comptrollers, searchers, &c., to all and singular our officers, and military and loving subjects whom it may concern, greeting: Our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby strictly charge and require you, as we do likewise pray and desire the officers and ministers of all princes and states, in amity with us, to permit and suffer the vessel called the Washington, commanded by Mr. —— Barney,[v] belonging to the United States of North America, to sail from either of the ports of France, to any port or place in North America, without any lett, hindrance, or molestation whatsoever, but on the contrary, affording the said vessel all such aid and assistance as may be necessary.

Given at our court at St. James's the tenth day of December, 1782, in the twenty-third year of our reign—by his majesty's command.

(Signed) T. TOWNSHEND.

To M. le Comte de Vergennes.

Passy, Dec. 15, 1782.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acquaint your excellency, that our courier is to set out to-morrow at ten o'clock, with the despatches we send to congress, by the Washington, captain Barney, for which ship we have got a passport from the king of England. If you would make any use of this conveyance, the courier shall wait upon you to-morrow at Versailles, and receive your orders.

I hoped I might have been able to send part of the aids we have asked, by this safe vessel. I beg that your excellency would at least inform me, what expectations I may give in my letters. I fear the congress will be reduced to despair, when they find that nothing is yet obtained.

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[v] Joshua Barney, distinguished at Bladensburg, during the war of 1814.

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With the greatest and most sincere respect, I am, sir, your excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

The Answer.

JE puis être surpris, monsieur, après l'explication que j'ai eu avec vous, et la promesse que vous m'aviez faite que vous ne presseriès pas l'obtention d'un passeport Anglois, pour l'expedition du pacquet bot le Washington, que vous me fassiès part que vous avez reçu le même passeport, et que demain à dix-heures du matin votre courrier partira pour porter vos depeches. Je suis assez embarrassé, monsieur, à expliquer votre conduite et celle de vos collegues à notre égard. Vous avez arreté vos articles préliminaires sans nous en faire part, quoique les instructions du Congrès vous pourscrivissent de ne rien faire sans la participation du Roi. Vous allez faire luire un espoir certain de paix en Amérique sans même vous informer de l'état de notre négociation. Vous êtes sage et avisé, monsieur; vous connoissez les bienséances, vous avez rempli toute votre vie vos devoirs. Croies vous satisfaire à ceux qui vous tiennent au Roi? Je ne veux pas *porter* plus loin les reflexions, je les abandonne à votre honnêteté. Quand vous aurez bien voulu satisfaire à mes doutes, je prierai le Roi de me mettre en état de rèpondre à vos demandes.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec une véritable considération, monsieur, votre trés humble et très-obèissant serviteur,

DE VERGENNES.

Versailles, le 15 *Xbre*, 1782.

TRANSLATION.

The Answer.

I CANNOT but be surprised, sir, that after the explanation I have had with you, and the promise you gave, that you would not press the application for an English passport, for the sailing of the packet Washington, that you now inform me, you have received the passport; and that at ten o'clock to-morrow morning your courier will set out to carry your despatches. I am at a loss, sir, to explain your conduct and that of your col-

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leagues on this occasion. You have concluded your preliminary articles without any communication between us, although the instructions from congress prescribes, that nothing shall be done without the participation of the king. You are about to hold out a certain hope of peace to America, without even informing yourself on the state of the negotiation on our part. . . . . You are wise and discreet, sir; you perfectly understand what is due to propriety; you have all you life performed your duties. I pray you to consider how you propose to fulfil those which are due to the king? I am not desirous of enlarging these reflections; I commit them to your own integrity. When you shall be pleased to relieve my uncertainty, I will entreat the king to enable me to answer your demands.

I have the honor to be, sir, with sincere regard, your very humble and obedient servant,

(Signed) DE VERGENNES.

Versailles, 10*th Dec.* 1782.

To M. le Comte de Vergennes.

Passy, Dec. 17, 1782.

SIR,

I RECEIVED the letter your excellency did me the honor of writing to me on the 15th instant. The proposal of having a passport from England was agreed to by me the more willingly, as I at that time had hopes of obtaining some money to send in the Washington, and the passport would have made its transportation safer, with that of our dispatches, and of yours also, if you had thought fit to make use of the occasion. Your excellency objected, as I understood it, that the English ministers by their letters sent in the same ship, might convey inconvenient expectations into America. It was therefore I proposed not to press for the passport till your preliminaries were also agreed to. They have sent the passport without being pressed to do it, and they have sent no letters to go under it, and ours will prevent the inconvenience apprehended. In a subsequent conversation your excellency mentioned your intention of sending some of the king's cutters, whence I imagined that detaining the Washington was no longer necessary; and it was certainly incum-

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bent on us to give congress as early an account as possible of our proceedings, who think it extremely strange to hear of them by other means, without a line from us. I acquainted your excellency, however, with our intention of dispatching that ship, supposing you might possibly have something to send by her.

Nothing has been agreed in the preliminaries contrary to the interests of France; and no peace is to take place between us and England, till you have concluded yours. Your observation is, however, apparently just, that in not consulting you before they were signed, we have been guilty of neglecting a point of *bienseance*. But as this was not from want of respect for the king, whom we all love and honor, we hope it will be excused; and that the great work which has hitherto been so happily conducted, is so nearly brought to perfection and is so glorious to his reign, will not be ruined by a single indiscretion of ours. And certainly the whole edifice sinks to the ground immediately, if you refuse on that account to give us any farther assistance.

We have not yet dispatched the ship, and I beg leave to wait upon you on Friday for your answer.

It is not possible for any one to be more sensible than *I* am, of what I and every American owe to the king, for the many and great benefits and favors he has bestowed upon us. All my letters to America are proofs of this; all tending to make the same impressions on the minds of my countrymen, that I felt in my own. And I believe that no prince was ever more beloved and respected by his own subjects, than the king is by the people of the United States. *The English, I just now learn, flatter themselves they have already divided us.* I hope this little misunderstanding will therefore be kept a secret, and that they will find themselves totally mistaken.

With great and sincere respect, I am, sir, your excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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A M. Franklin.

Versailles, le 25 Xbre, 1782.

J'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer, monsieur, mes dépeches pour M. le Chevalier de la Luzerne: le paquet est volumineux, mais il renferme beaucoup de duplicats.

Je voudrois pouvoir lui mander que notre négociation est au même point que la votre, mais elle en est encore fort éloignée. Je ne puis même prevoir quelle en sera l'issue, car les difficultés naissent des facilités aux quelles nous nous sommes prêtés. Il sera bon, monsieur, que vous en preveniés le congrès pour le prémunir contre tout ce qui peut arriver. Je ne désespère pas, j'espère plutôt, mais tout est encore incertain.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec une parfaite considération, monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

DE VERGENNES.

TRANSLATION.

To Mr. Franklin.

Versailles, 25th Dec. 1782.

I HAVE the honor to inclose you, sir, my despatches for the Chevalier de la Luzerne, the package is bulky, but it incloses many duplicates.

I wish it was in my power to write him, that our negotiation was as far advanced as yours, but it is not. I cannot foresee what will be the issue, for difficulties arise from the very facilities we afford. It will be well, sir, to advise congress to provide against whatever may happen. I do not despair, I rather hope; but all is uncertain.

I have the honor to be, sir, with perfect consideration, your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) DE VERGENNES.

To Richard Oswald, Esq.

SIR, *Passy, Jan.* 14, 1783.

I AM much obliged by your information of your intended trip to England; I heartily wish you a good journey, and a speedy return, and request your kind care of a packet for Mr. Hodgson.

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I inclose two papers, that were read at different times by me to the commissioners; they may serve to show, if you should have occasion, what was urged on the part of America on certain points; or may help to refresh your memory. I send you also another paper which I once read to you separately. It contains a proposition for improving the *law of* nations, by prohibiting the plundering of unarmed and usefully employed people. I rather wish than expect, that it will be adopted. But I think it may be offered with a better grace by a country that is likely to suffer least, and gain most by continuing the ancient practice; which is our case, as the American ships laden only with the gross productions of the earth, cannot be so valuable as yours, filled with sugars or with manufactures. It has not yet been considered by my colleagues; but if you should think or find that it might be acceptable on your side, I would try to get it inserted in the general treaty. I think it will do honor to the nations that establish it.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.

B. FRANKLIN.

Propositions relative to Privateering, &c., communicated to Mr. Oswald.

IT is for the interest of humanity in general, that the occasions of war, and the inducements to it should be diminished.

If rapine is abolished, one of the encouragements to war is taken away, and peace therefore more likely to continue and be lasting.

The practice of robbing merchants on the high seas, a remnant of the ancient piracy, though it may be accidentally beneficial to particular persons, is far from being profitable to all engaged in it, or to the nation that athorises it. In the beginning of a war, some rich ships, not upon their guard, are surprised and taken. This encourages the first adventurers

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to fit out more armed vessels, and many others to do the same. But the enemy at the same time become more careful, arm their merchant ships better, and render them not so easy to be taken; they go also more under protection of convoys: thus while the privateers to take them are multiplied, the vessels subject to be taken, and the chances of profit are diminished, so that many cruises are made wherein the expenses overgo the gains; and as is the case in other lotteries, though particulars have got prizes, the mass of adventurers are losers, the whole expense of fitting out all the privateers, during a war, being much greater than the whole amount of goods taken. Then there is the national loss of all the labor of so many men during the time they have been employed in robbing; who besides spend what they get in riot, drunkenness, and debauchery, lose their habits of industry, are rarely fit for any sober business after a peace, and serve only to increase the number of highwaymen and housebreakers. Even the undertakers who have been fortunate, are by sudden wealth led into expensive living, the habit of which continues, when the means of supporting it ceases, and finally ruins them. A just punishment for their having wantonly and unfeelingly ruined many honest, innocent traders and their families, whose subsistence was employed in serving the common interests of mankind.

Should it be agreed and become a part of the law of nations, that the cultivators of the earth are not to be molested or interrupted in their peaceable and useful employment, the inhabitants of the sugar islands would perhaps come under the protection of such a regulation, which would be a great advantage to the nations who at present hold those islands, since the cost of sugar to the consumer in those nations, consists not merely in the price he pays for it by the pound, but in the accumulated charge of all the taxes he pays in every war, to fit out fleets and maintain troops for the defence of the islands that raise the sugar, and the ships that bring it home. But the expense of treasure is not all. A celebrated philosophical writer remarks, that when he considered the

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wars made in Africa, for prisoners to raise sugars in America, the numbers slain in those wars, the numbers that, being crowded in ships, perish in the transportation, and the numbers that die under the severities of slavery, he could scarce look on a morsel of sugar without conceiving it spotted with human blood. If he had considered also the blood of one another, which the white nations shed in fighting for those islands, he would have imagined his sugar not as spotted only, but as thoroughly dyed red. On these accounts I am persuaded that the subjects of the emperor of Germany, and the empress of Russia, who have no sugar islands, consume sugar cheaper at Vienna, and Moscow, with all the charge of transporting it after its arrival in Europe, than the citizens of London or of Paris. And I sincerely believe, that if France and England were to decide, by throwing dice, which should have the whole of their sugar islands, the loser in the throw would be the gainer. The future expense of defending them would be saved: the sugars would be bought cheaper by all Europe if the inhabitants might make it without interruption, and whoever imported the sugar, the same revenue might be raised by duties at the custom-houses of the nation that consumed it. And on the whole I conceive it would be better for the nations now possessing sugar colonies to give up their claim to them, let them govern themselves, and put them under the protection of all the powers of Europe as neutral countries, open to the commerce of all, the profits of the present monopolies being by no means equivalent to the expense of maintaining them.

Lettre de M. le Comte de Vergennes, à Monsieur Franklin.

Il est essentiel, monsieur, que je puisse avoir l'honneur de conferer avec vous, avec M. Adams, et avec ceux de messieurs vos collegues, qui peuvent se trouver à Paris. Je vous prie, en consequence, monsieur, de vouloir bien inviter ces messieurs de se rendre à Versailles avec vous Lundi, avant dix heures du matin. Il seroit bon que vous amenassiés, mon-

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sieur, votre petit fils avec vous, il pourra nous etre necessaire pour rendre plusieurs choses d'Anglois en Francois, et même pour ecrire. L'objet dont j'ai à vous entretenir est très interressant pour les Etats Unis, vos maitres.

J'ai l'honneur d'etre avec une parfaite consideration, monsieur, votre très humble et très obeissant serviteur,

DE VERGENNES.

Versailles, le Samedi soir, 18 *Janvier,* 1783.

TRANSLATION.

Letter from the Count de Vergennes to Mr. Franklin.

IT is essential, sir, that I should have the honor of conferring with yourself, with Mr. Adams, and those of your colleagues who may be in Paris. I have therefore to request, sir, that you will be pleased to invite those gentlemen to come to Versailles, with you, on Monday, before ten o'clock in the morning. It will be well, sir, to bring with you your grandson, as it will be necessary to translate some English into French, and also to write. The subject I have to converse with you upon is very interesting to the United States, your masters.

I have the honor to be, sir, with profound consideration your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) DE VERGENNES.

Versailles, Saturday evening, 18*th Jan.* 1783.

To M. le Comte de Vergennes.

Passy, Jan. 18, 1783, *at ten P. M.*

SIR,

AGREEABLE to the notice just received from your excellency, I shall acquaint Mr. Adams with your desire to see us on Monday before ten o'clock at Versailles, and we shall endeavor to be punctual. My other colleagues are absent, Mr. Laurens being gone to Bath in England, to recover his health, and Mr. Jay into Normandy.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

I shall bring my grandson, as you desire.

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From B. Vaughan, Esq., to Dr. Franklin.

(*Private.*) *Paris, Jan.* 18, 1783.

MY DEAREST SIR,

I CANNOT but in the most earnest manner, and from *recent* circumstances, press your going *early* to Versailles to-morrow; and I have considerable reason to think, that your appearance there will not displease the person whom you address. I am of opinion, that it is very likely, that you will have the glory of having concluded the peace, by this visit; at least I am sure, if the deliberations of to-morrow evening end unfavorably, that there is the strongest appearance of war; and if they end favorably, perhaps little difficulty may attend the rest.

After all, the peace will have as much that is conceded in it, as England can in any shape be made just now to relish; owing to the stubborn demands, principally of Spain, who would not I believe upon any motive recede from her conquests. What I wrote about Gibraltar, arrived after the subject as I understand was canvassed, and when it of course must have appeared impolitic eagerly and immediately to revive it.

You reproved me, or rather reproved a political scheme yesterday, of which I have heard more said favorably by your *friends* at *Paris*, than by any persons whatever in London. But do you, my dear sir, make *this* peace, and trust our common sense respecting another war. England, said a man of sense to me the other day, will come out of the war like a convalescent out of a disease, and must be re-established by some physic and much regimen. I cannot easily tell in what shape a bankruptcy would come upon England, and still less easily in what mode and degree it would affect us; but if your confederacy mean to bankrupt us now, I am sure we shall lose the great *fear* that would deter us from another war. Your allies therefore for policy, and for humanity's sake, will I hope stop short of this extremity; especially as we

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should do some mischief first to others, as well as to ourselves.

I am, my dearest sir, your ever devoted, ever affectionate, and ever obliged,

B. VAUGHAN.

David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

With Propositions.

London, March 12, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IT is a long while since I have heard from you, or indeed since I writ to you. I heartily congratulate you on those pacific events which have already happened, and I wish to see all other final steps of conciliation succeed speedily. I send you copies of two papers, which I have already communicated to Mr. Laurens; the one called *Conciliatory Propositions, in March,* 1783; the other *A Sketch of a provisional treaty of Commerce for opening the ports between Great Britain and the United States of America, without delay;* to each of which is prefixed a short state of the argument on each head.

As for the news of this country, you have doubtless heard, that lord Shelburne's administration has for some time been considered as at an end; although no other has been as yet substituted in the place of it. It was understood yesterday, and I believe with good foundation, that what is now called the Portland party have been applied to, and they are now considered as the party most likely to succeed. As far as my wishes go, such an event would be most satisfactory to me. I have known the duke of Portland for many years, and by experience I know him to be a nobleman of the strictest honor and of the soundest whig principles, sincere and explicit in every thought and transaction, manly in his judgment, and firm in his conduct. The kingdom of Ireland, of which he was lately lord-lieutenant, bears unanimous testimony to this character of him. The Cavendish family (a good whig name)

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Mr. Fox, lord Fitzwilliam, &c. &c., form the core of his system and connections. I most earnestly wish to see a firm administration upon a whig foundation, which I should consider as a solid basis, on the part of this country, for a perpetual correspondence of amity and conciliation with America. I am very anxious to hear of your health. God bless you.

Ever your most affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.

Conciliatory Propositions, March, 1783.

TERMS of peace having been agreed upon between Great Britain and France, on the 20th January, 1783, there need not be any farther delay in proceeding to conclude the proposed treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America, upon the basis of the provisional articles of the 30th of Nov. 1782.

It is to be observed that none of the articles of the provisional treaty are to take effect, until the conclusion of the definitive treaty with America, at which time likewise all places in the American States, in possession of the British arms, are to be evacuated, and the British army withdrawn from the United States (by article 7). If therefore it should be wished on the part of Great Britain to bring forward the fifth article respecting the loyalists, before the conclusion of the definitive treaty with America, the bayonet should be withdrawn from the American breast by the voluntary removal of the British troops with all convenient dispatch. This condition of the removal of the troops is likewise necessary before any provisional terms of commerce with America can take place.

By the 6th article of the provisional treaty, all future confiscations in America are precluded, although the prosecutions at present subsisting, are not to be stopped before the definitive treaty. But if the substantial pledge of returning amity on the part of Great Britain, viz., the removal of the troops, should be voluntarily anticipated, it would be but reasonable that all prosecutions should be immediately abated

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on the part of America; and to facilitate the removal of the troops, the loyalists may be permitted to remain in safety and unmolested (if they choose to remain) from the period of removing the troops until twelve months after the definitive treaty.

There is another article of the provisional treaty, the delay of which is much to be lamented, viz., the mutual release of prisoners of war on both sides. As this is an article of reciprocity, both sides, from principles of humanity, are equally interested to bring it forward into effect speedily; that those unhappy captives may not alone suffer the miseries of war in the time of peace.

Upon these considerations the following supplemental terms of treaty between Great Britain and the United States are proposed:

1, That the British troops shall be withdrawn with all convenient speed.

2, That the commissioners on both sides do proceed to the conclusion of the definitive treaty.

3, That the commissioners do speedily negotiate a provisional convention of commerce (hereunto annexed) to take place immediately. The terms of this temporary convention not to be pleaded on either side in the negotiation of a final and perpetual treaty of commerce between Great Britain and the United States.

4, That the commissioners do negotiate a perpetual treaty of commerce.

5, That all prosecutions of the loyalists in America be immediately abated, and that they be permitted to remain until twelve months after the definitive treaty, unmolested in their endeavors to obtain restitution of their estates.

6, That all prisoners on both sides be immediately released.

7, That intercourse of amity and commerce do immediately take place between Great Britain and the United States of America.

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Sketch of a Provisional Treaty of Commerce.

As soon as preliminaries of peace are signed with any independent states, such as Spain, France, and Holland, the course of mutual commerce emerges upon the same terms and conditions as were existing antecedent to the war, the new duties imposed during the war excepted. The *case* between Great Britain and America is different, because America, from a dependent nation before the war, emerges an independent nation after the war. The basis therefore of provisional treaty between Great Britain and the United States would be simply to arrange such points as would emerge after the war, impracticable and discordant to the newly established independence of the American States, and to leave all others, as much as possible, untouched: For instance, that all instrumental regulations, such as papers, bonds, certificates, oaths, and all other documents should be between Great Britain and the United States upon the same footing, and no other than as between Great Britain and any other independent nation, but that all duties, drawbacks, bounties, rights, privileges, and all pecuniary considerations should emerge into action and effect as before. I say emerge as before, not stipulated for any fixed term, because I am speaking of a provisional *treaty*, not of a provisional *bill* of commerce, for a specified period. By this means all difficulties which otherwise would be accumulated, and obstruct a temporary and provisional act are avoided *in limine*. The ports will be immediately opened upon specified and known conditions. If the legislature of either country think proper to introduce on its own part any new conditions or regulations, even previous to the intended treaty of commerce, that will not shut the ports again generally but only operate *pro tanto* according to the case; on which side soever any novel condition should arise, the other will likewise be at liberty to make any corresponding regulations as between independent nations. The great object is to open the ports between Great Britain and the United States immediately on the signature of preliminaries of peace, as between France and Great Britain. By the pro-

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position above stated, Great Britain and France, and Great Britain and the United States respectively, on the subject of intercourse of commerce, would emerge again after the war, into situations relatively similar to their situation before the war.

The crown of Great Britain is enabled by the conciliatory act of 1782 to repeal, annul, make void, or suspend, for any time or times, the operation and effect of any act of parliament, or any clause, provision, matter or thing therein contained, relating to the colonies or plantations now become the United States of America; and therefore the crown is not only competent to conclude, but likewise to carry into effect any provisional treaty of commerce with America. The first foundation must be laid in the total repeal of the prohibitory act of December, 1775, not only as prohibiting commerce between Great Britain, and the United States, but as the corner stone of the war; by giving up universally all American property at sea to military plunder, without any redress to be obtained by law in any British court of admiralty. After this all obstructions from the act of navigation and other acts regulating the commerce of the States of America (formerly dependent upon Great Britain), may be removed. Instructions may be sent to the commissioners of the customs to dispense with bonds, certificates, &c., which by the old laws are required to be discharged or attested by supposed governors, naval or customhouse officers in America. The questions of drawbacks, bounties, &c., after opening the ports, may remain free points of discussion and regulation, as between states having no commercial treaty subsisting between them. As the crown is competent to open an intercourse of commerce with America by treaty, this mode is preferable to any act of parliamant, which may be only a jealous and suspicious convention *ex parte*. This mode by treaty avoids the accumulated difficulties which might otherwise obstruct the first opening of the ports by act of parliament, and above all it secures an alternate binding part of the bargain, which no act of parliament can do.

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Breviate of the treaty, viz., Provisional for intercourse and commerce between Great Britain and the United States of America.

1, That all ports shall be mutually open for intercourse and commerce.

2, And therefore the king of Great Britain agrees, *for the* repeal of the prohibitory acts, viz., 16 Geo. 3, chap. 5, &c. The king of Great Britain likewise agrees by instructions, according to the laws of Great Britain, to his commissioners of customs and other officers, to remove all obstructions to American ships, either entering inwards or clearing outwards, which may arise from any acts of parliament heretofore regulating the commerce of the American states, under the description of British colonies or plantations, so as to accommodate every circumstance to the reception of their ships, as the ships of independent states.

3, All duties, drawbacks, bounties, rights, privileges, and all other money considerations shall remain, respecting the United States of America, upon the same footing as they now remain, respecting the province of Nova Scotia in America, or as if the aforesaid states had remained dependent upon Great Britain. All this subject to regulations or alterations by any future acts of the parliament of Great Britain.

4, On the part of the states of America, it is agreed that all laws prohibiting the commerce with Great Britain shall be repealed.

5, Agreed upon the same part, that all ships, and merchandise of the British dominions shall be admitted upon the same terms as before the war, except any imposts laid during the war. All this subject to future regulations or alterations by the legislatures of American states respectively.

6, The principles and spirit of this treaty to be supported on either side by any necessary supplemental arrangements. No tacit compliance on the part of America in any subordinate points to be argued at any time hereafter to the prejudice of their independence.

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To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, March 23, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED the letter you did me the honor of writing to me, requesting a recommendation to America of Mr. Joshua Grigby. I have accordingly written one; and having an opportunity the other day, I sent it under cover to Mr. Benjamin Vaughan. The general proclamations you wished for suspending, or rather putting an end to hostilities, are now published; so that your "heart is at rest," and mine with it. You may depend on my joining my hearty endeavors with yours, in "cultivating conciliatory principles between our two countries;" and I may venture to assure you, that if your bill for a provisional establishment of the commerce had passed as at first proposed, a stipulation on our part in the definitive treaty, to allow reciprocal and equal advantages and privileges to your subjects, would have been readily agreed to.

With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

London, March 31, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I SEND you a paper entitled *Supplemental Treaty*, the substance of which I sent you some time ago, as I read it, in part of a speech in the house of commons. I have given a copy of it to Mr. L., as the grounds upon which my friend the duke of Portland, would have wished that any administration in which he might have taken a part should have treated with the American ministers. All negotiations for the formation of a ministry, in concert with the duke of Portland, are at an end.

The 10th article, which is supposed to be referred to the definitive treaty, is a renewal of the same proposition which

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I moved in parliament some years ago, viz. on the 9th of April, 1778. I see nothing inconsistent with that proposition, either in the declaration of independence or in the treaty with France. Let it therefore remain, and emerge after the war, as a point untouched by the war. I assure you my consent should not be wanting to extend this principle between *all* the nations upon earth. I know full well, that those nations to which you and I are bound by birth and consanguinity would reap the earliest fruits from it; *owing no man hate, and envying no man's happiness,* I should rejoice in the lot of my own country, and on her part say to America, *Nos duo turba sumus.* I send you, likewise, inclosed with this, some sentiments respecting the principles of some late negociations, drawn up in the shape of parliamentary motions by my brother, who joins with me in the sincerest good wishes to you for health and happiness, and for the peace of our respective countries, and of mankind.

Your ever affectionate,

DAVID HARTLEY.

Supplemental Treaty between Great Britain, *and the* United States of North America.

1, That that British troops be withdrawn from the United States with all convenient speed.

2, That all farther prosecutions of loyalists in America be immediately abated, and that they be permitted to remain until twelve months after the definitive treaty with America in safety and unmolested, in their endeavors to obtain restitution of their estates.

3, That all ports shall be mutually opened for intercourse and commerce, between Great Britain and the United States.

4, Agreed on the part of Great Britain, that all prohibitory acts shall be repealed, and that all obstructions to American ships, either entering inwards or clearing outwards, shall be removed, which may arise from any acts of parliament, heretofore regulating the commerce of the American States,

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under the description of British colonies and plantations, so as to accommodate every circumstance to the reception of their ships, as the ships of independent States.

5, Agreed on the part of Great Britain, that all duties, rights, privileges, and all pecuniary considerations shall remain, respecting the United States of America, upon the same footing as they now remain respecting the province of Nova Scotia, or as if the said States had remained dependent upon Great Britain. All this subject to regulations and alterations by any future acts of the parliament of Great Britain.

6, On the part of the American States it is agreed, that all laws prohibiting commerce with Great Britain shall be repealed.

7, Agreed on the part of the American States, that all ships and merchandise of the British dominions shall be admitted upon the same terms as before the war. All this subject to future regulations or alterations by the legislatures of the American States respectively.

8, That all prisoners on both sides be immediately released.

9, The spirit and principles of this treaty to be supported on either side by any necessary supplemental arrangements. No tacit compliance on the part of the American States in any subordinate points to be urged at any time hereafter in derogation of their independence.

Separate article to be referred to the definitive treaty.

10, Neither shall the independence of the United States be construed any farther than as independence, absolute and unlimited in matters of government as well as commerce. Not into alienation, and therefore the subjects of his Britannic majesty and the citizens of the United States shall mutually be considered as natural born subjects, and enjoy all rights and privileges as such in the respective dominions and territories, in the manner heretofore accustomed.

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Paper mentioned in the close of Mr. Hartley's Letter of March 31, 1783.

1, That it is the opinion of this house, that whenever Great Britain thought proper to acknowlege the independence of America, the mode of putting it into effect most honorably for this country, would have been, to have made the declaration of independence previous to the commencement of any treaty with any other power.

2, That a deviation from that line of conduct, has the effect of appearing to grant the independence of America solely to the demands of the house of Bourbon, and not, as was the real state of the case, from a change in the sentiments of this country, as to the object and continuance of the American war.

3, That when this house by its vote against the farther prosecution of offensive war in America, had given up the point of contest, and adopted a conciliatory disposition, the pursuing those principles by an immediate and liberal negotiation upon the basis of independence, at the same time expressing a readiness to conclude a general peace with the allies of America upon honorable terms, would have been the most likely way to promote a mutual and beneficial intercourse between the two countries; to establish peace upon a firm foundation; and would have prevented the house of Bourbon from having a right to claim any farther obligations from America, as the assertors of their independence.

4, That the minister who advised the late negotiations for peace, has neglected to make use of those advantages which the determination of the house put him in possession of: that, by his delay in authorizing persons properly to negotiate with the American commissioners, he has shown a reluctance to acting upon the liberal principles of granting independence to America, as the determination of Great Britain upon mature consideration of the question: and has by such methods given advantage to the enemies of this country to promote and confirm that commerce and connection be-

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tween the United States of America and themselves, which during the contest have been turned from their natural channel with this country, and which this peace so concluded has not yet contributed to restore.

From C. J. Fox, Esq., Secretary of State, to B. Franklin, Esq.

SIR,

ALTHOUGH it is unnecessary for me to introduce to your acquaintance a gentleman so well known to you as Mr. Hartley, who will have the honor of delivering to you this letter, yet it may be proper for me to inform you, that he has the full and entire confidence of his majesty's ministers upon the subject of his mission.

Permit me, sir, to take this opportunity of assuring you, how happy I should esteem myself, if it were to prove my lot to be the instrument of completing a real and substantial reconciliation between two countries, formed by nature to be in a state of friendship one with the other, and thereby to put the finishing hand to a building, in laying the first stone of which I may fairly boast that I had some share.

I have the honor to be, with every sentiment of regard and esteem, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

C. J. FOX.

St. James's, April 19, 1783.

To David Hartley, Esq., M. P.

Passy, May 8, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND,

I SEND you inclosed the copies you desired of the papers I read to you yesterday.[x] I should be happy if I could see, before I die, the proposed improvement of the law of nations established. The miseries of mankind would be diminished

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[x] See the Proposition about Privateering, annexed to Letter to R. Oswald, Esq., January 14, 1783.

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by it, and the happiness of millions secured and promoted. If the practice of *privateering* could be profitable to any civilized nation, it might be so to us Americans, since we are so situated on the globe, as that the rich commerce of Europe with the West Indies, consisting of manufactures, sugars, &c. is obliged to pass before our doors, which enables us to make short and cheap cruises, while our own commerce is in such bulky low-priced articles, as that ten of our ships taken by you are not equal in value to one of yours, and you must come far from home at a great expense to look for them. I hope therefore that this proposition, if made by us, will appear in its true light, as having humanity only for its motive. I do not wish to see a new Barbary rising in America, and our long extended coast occupied by piratical states. I fear lest our privateering success in the two last wars, should already have given our people too strong a relish for that most mischievous kind of gaming, mixed blood; and if a stop is not now put to the practice, mankind may hereafter be more plagued with American corsairs than they have been and are with the Turkish. Try, my friend, what you can do, in procuring for your nation the glory of being, *though the* greatest naval power, the first who voluntarily relinquished the advantage that power seems to give them, of plundering others, and thereby impeding the mutual communications among men of the gifts of God, and rendering miserable multitudes of merchants and their families, artizans, and cultivators of the earth, the most peaceable and innocent part of the human species.

With great esteem and affection, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

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To Henry Laurens, Esq.

Passy, July 6, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

WE have been honored with several of your letters, and we have talked of writing to you, but it has been delayed. I will therefore write a few lines in my private capacity.

Our negotiations go on slowly, every proposition being sent to England, and answers not returning very speedily.

Captain Barney arrived here last Wednesday, and brought dispatches for us as late as the first of June. The preliminary articles are ratified. But general Carleton, in violation of those articles, has sent away a great number of negroes, alleging, that freedom having been promised them by a proclamation, the honor of the nation was concerned, &c. Probably another reason may be, that if they had been restored to their masters, Britain could not have hoped any thing from such another proclamation hereafter.

Mr. Hartley called yesterday to tell us, that he had received a letter from Mr. Fox, assuring him that our suspicions of affected delays or change of system on their side were groundless; and that they were sincerely desirous to finish as soon as possible. If this be so, and your health will permit the journey, I could wish your return as soon as possible. I want you here on many accounts, and should be glad of your assistance in considering and answering our public letters. There are matters in them of which I cannot conveniently give you an account at present.

Nothing could be more seasonable than success in the project you proposed, but we have now very little expectation.

Please to give my love to your valuable and amiable son and daughter, and believe me with sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLLIN.

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Extract of a Letter to Robert R. Livingston, Esq.

Passy, July 22, 1783.

YOU have complained sometimes with reason of not hearing often from your foreign ministers; we have had cause to make the same complaints, six full months having intervened between the latest date of your preceding letters and the receipt of those per captain Barney. During all this time we were ignorant of the reception of the provisional treaty, and the sentiments of congress upon it, which if we had received sooner might have forwarded the proceedings on the definitive treaty, and perhaps brought it to a conclusion at a time more favorable than the present. But these occasional interruptions of correspondence are the inevitable consequences of a state of war, and of such remote situations.

Barney had a short passage, and arrived some days before colonel Ogden, who also brought dispatches from you, all of which are come safe to hand.

We the commissioners have in our joint capacity written a letter to you, which you will receive with this. I shall now answer yours of March 26, May 9, and May 31.

It gave me great pleasure to learn by the first, that the news of the peace diffused general satisfaction. I will not now take upon me to justify the apparent reserve respecting this court at the signature, which you disapprove. We have touched upon it in our general letter. I do not see, however, that they have much reason to complain of that transaction. Nothing was stipulated to their prejudice, and none of the stipulations were to have force but by a subsequent act of their own. I suppose, indeed, that they have not complained of it, or you would have sent me a copy of the complaint, that we might have answered it. I long since satisfied count de Vergennes about it here. We did what appeared to all of us best at the time, and if we have done wrong, the congress will do right, after hearing us, to censure us. Their nomination of five persons to the service, seems to mark that they had some dependence on our joint judgment, since one alone,

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could have made a treaty by direction of the French ministry as well as twenty. I will only add, that with respect to myself, neither the letter from Mr. Marbois, handed to us through the British negotiators, (a suspicious channel) nor the conversations respecting the fishery, the boundaries, the royalists, &c. recommending moderation in our demands, are of weight sufficient in my mind, to fix an opinion that this court wished to restrain us in obtaining any degree of advantage we could prevail on our enemies to accord; since those discourses are fairly resolvable, by supposing a very natural apprehension, that we relying too much on the ability of France to continue the war in our favor, and supply us constantly with money, might insist on more advantages than the English would be willing to grant, and thereby lose the opportunity of making peace, so necessary to all our friends.

When the commercial article, mentioned in yours of the 26th, was struck out of our proposed preliminaries, by the then British ministry, the reason given was, that sundry acts of parliament still in force were against it, and must be first repealed, which I believe was actually their intention, and sundry bills were accordingly brought in for that purpose. But new ministers with different principles succeeding, a commercial proclamation totally different from those bills has lately appeared. I send inclosed a copy of it. We shall try what can be done in the definitive treaty, towards setting aside that proclamation; but if it should be persisted in, it will then be a matter worthy the attentive discussion of congress, whether it will be most prudent to retort with a similar regulation in order to force its repeal, which may possibly tend to bring on another quarrel, or to let it pass without notice, and leave it to its own inconvenience or rather impracticability in the execution, and to the complaints of the West India planters, who must all pay much dearer for our produce under those restrictions. I am not enough master of the course of our commerce, to give an opinion on this particular question; and it does not behove me to do it; yet I have seen so much embarrassment and so little advantage in all the re-

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straining and compulsive systems, that I feel myself strongly inclined to believe that a State, which leaves all her ports open to all the world upon equal terms, will by that means have foreign commodities cheaper, and sell its own productions dearer, and be on the whole most prosperous. I have heard some merchants say, that there is ten per *cent.* difference between *Will you buy?* and *Will you sell?* When foreigners bring us their goods, they want to part with them speedily, that they may purchase their cargoes and dispatch their ships, which are at constant charges in our ports. We have then the advantage of their, *Will you buy?* and when they demand our produce, we have the advantage of their *Will you sell?* and the concurring demands of a number also contribute to raise our prices. Thus both these questions are in our favor at home; against us abroad. The employing, however, of our own ships, and raising a breed of seamen among us, though it should not be a matter of so much private profit as some imagine, is nevertheless of political importance, and must have weight in considering this subject.

The judgment you make of the conduct of France in the peace, and the greater glory acquired by her moderation than even by her arms, appears to me perfectly *just. The character* of this court and nation seems of late years to be considerably changed. The ideas of aggrandizement by conquest, are out of fashion; and those of commerce are more enlightened and more generous than heretofore. We shall soon, I believe, feel something of this, in our being admitted to greater freedom of trade with their islands. The wise here think France great enough, and its ambition at present seems to be only that of justice and magnanimity towards other nations, fidelity, and utility to its allies.

I have received no answer yet from congress to my request of being dismissed from this service. They should methinks reflect, that if they continue me here, the faults I may henceforth commit through the infirmities of age, will be rather theirs than mine.

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I am glad my journal afforded you any pleasure. I will, as you desire, endeavor to continue it.

I am sorry to find that you have thoughts of quitting the service. I do not think your place can be easily well supplied. You mention that an entire new arrangement, with respect to foreign affairs, is under consideration: I wish to know whether any notice is likely to be taken in it of my grandson. He has now gone through an apprenticeship of near seven years in the ministerial business, and is very capable of serving the states in that line, as possessing all the requisites of knowlege, zeal, activity, language, and address. He is liked here, and count de Vergennes has expressed to me in warm terms his very good opinion of him. The late Swedish ambassador count de Creutz, who is gone home to be prime minister, desired I would endeavor to procure his being sent to Sweden with a public character, assuring me, that he should be glad to receive him there, as our minister, and that he knew it would be pleasing to the king. The present Swedish ambassador has also proposed the same thing to me, as you will see by a letter of his which I inclose. One of the Danish ministers. M. Waltersdorff, (who will probably be sent in a public character to congress) has also expressed his wish that my grandson may be sent to Denmark. But it is not my custom to solicit employments for myself or any of my family, and I shall not do it in this case. I only hope that if he is not to be employed in your new arrangement, I may be informed of it as soon as possible, that while I have strength left for it, I may accompany him in a tour to Italy, returning through Germany, which I think he may make to more advantage with me than alone, and which I have long promised to afford him, as a reward for his faithful service, and his tender filial attachment to me.

Our people who were prisoners in England are now all discharged. During the whole war, those who were in Forton prison near Portsmouth, were much befriended by the constant charitable care of Mr. Wren, a Presbyterian mi-

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nister there; who spared no pains to assist them in their sickness and distress, by procuring and distributing among them the contributions of good christians, and prudently dispensing the allowance I made them, which gave him a deal of trouble, but he went through it cheerfully. I think some particular notice should be taken of this good man. I wish the congress would enable me to make him a present, and that some of our universities would confer upon him the degree of doctor.

The duke of Manchester, who has always been our friend in the house of lords, is now here ambassador from England. I dine with him to-day (26th) and if any thing of importance occurs, I will add it in a postscript.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the congress, assure them of my most faithful services, and believe me to be with great and sincere esteem, sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To M. le Comte de Vergennes.

Passy, Aug. 16, 1783.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to inform your excellency, that the English ministry do not agree to any of the propositions that have been made either by us, or by their minister here; and they have sent over a plan for the definitive treaty, which consists merely of the preliminaries formerly signed, with a short introductory paragraph, and another at the conclusion, confirming and establishing the said preliminary articles. My colleagues seem inclined to sign this with Mr. Hartley, and so to finish the affair.

I am, with respect, sir, your excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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Mons. de Rayneval, (Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) à Mons. Franklin.

A Versailles, le 29 *Aout,* 1783.

J'ai rendu compte à M. le comte de Vergennes, monsieur, de la difficulté que fait M. Hartley de signer à Versailles, et ce ministre m'a chargé de vous mander que rien ne devoit vous empêcher de signer à Paris Mercredi prochain, jour de signé pour la signature des autres traités: mais il vous prie d'indiquer à Mr. Hartley 9 heures du matin, et d'envoyer ici un exprès immédiatement après votre signature faite. M. de Vergennes veut etre assuré que votre besogne est consomée en même tems que la sienne. Vous recevez pour Mercredi un billet d'invitation ainsi que messieurs vos collegues et monsieur Hartley; je presume que celui-ci n'y trouvera aucune difficulté.

J'ai l'honneur d'etre avec un parfait attachement, monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

DE RAYNEVAL.

TRANSLATION.

Mr. De Rayneval (Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) to Dr. Franklin.

Versailles, 29th Aug. 1783.

I HAVE informed the count of Vergennes, sir, of the difficulty which Mr. Hartley has made to signing at Versailles; and this minister has directed me to say, that nothing ought to prevent your signing at Paris, on Wednesday next, the day proposed for the signature of the other treaties: but I request you to fix the hour with Mr. Hartley at 9 o'clock in the morning, and to send here an express immediately after your signature is completed. M. de Vergennes is desirous of being informed of the completion of your labors at the same time with his own. You receive for Wednesday a note of invitation, as well as for your colleagues and Mr. Hartley; I presume that the latter will make no difficulty.

I have the honor to be, sir, with perfect consideration, your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) DE RAYNEVAL.

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From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

Bath, Sept. 24, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM at present at Bath with my dearest sister, whom I have found as well as I could have expected, and I hope with reasonable prospect of recovery in time. I have seen my friends in the ministry, and hope things will go on well; with them I am sure all is right and firm. The chief part of the cabinet ministers are out of town, but there will be a full cabinet held in a few days, in which a specific proposition in the nature of a temporary convention will be given in instructions to me. I imagine, nearly upon the ground of my memorial of May 19, 1783, which I delivered to the American ministers; viz., "American ships not to bring foreign manufactures into Great Britain, nor to trade directly between the British West Indies and Great Britain," all the rest to be as before the war. I expect that something to this effect will be their determination, in the offer, and if it should be so, I shall hope not to meet with difficulty on your parts. I want to see some specific beginning. As to any farther proposition respecting the trade between Great Britain and the British West Indies, I doubt whether any such can be discussed before the meeting of parliament. I wish to look forward not only to the continuation of peace between our two countries, but to the improvement of reconciliation into alliance, and therefore I wish the two parties to be disposed to accommodate each other, without the strict account by weights and scales as between aliens and strangers, actuated towards each other by no other principle than cold and equalizing indifference. Friendly dispositions presumed have their fairest chance of being realized, but if we should set out presuming against them, the good which might have happened may be prevented. Pray remember me to your three colleagues, and to all friends.

Yours, ever most affectionately,

D. HARTLEY.

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PS. I have put in a word for our quaker article, and I hope with some impression.

To David Hartley, Esq.

Passy, Oct. 16, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE nothing material to write to you respecting public affairs, but I cannot let Mr. Adams, who will see you, go without a line to inquire after your welfare, to inform you of mine, and assure you of my constant respect and attachment.

I think with you, that your quaker article is a good one, and that men will in time have sense enough to adopt it, but I fear that time is not yet come.

What would you think of a proposition if I should make it, of a family compact between England, France, and America? America would be as happy as the Sabine girls, if she could be the means of uniting in perpetual peace her father and her husband. What repeated follies are those repeated wars? You do not want to conquer and govern one another. Why then should you be continually employed in injuring and destroying one another? How many excellent things might have been done to promote the internal welfare of each country; what bridges, roads, canals, and other useful public works and institutions, tending to the common felicity, might have been made and established, with the money and men foolishly spent during the last seven centuries by our mad wars in doing one another mischief? You are near neighbors, and each have very respectable qualities. Learn to be quiet and to respect each others rights. You are all christians. One is the most christian king, and the other defender of the faith. Manifest the propriety of these titles by your future conduct. By this, says Christ, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. Seek peace, and ensure it.

Adieu, yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

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To the same.

Passy, Oct. 22, 1783.

I RECEIVED my dear friend's kind letter of the 4th instant from Bath, with your proposed temporary convention, which you desire me to shew to my colleagues. They are both by this time in London, where you will undoubtedly see and converse with them on the subject. The apprehension you mention, that the cement of the confederation may be annihilated, &c. has not I think any foundation. There is sense enough in America to take care of their own china vase. I see much in your papers about our divisions and distractions, but I hear little of them from America; and I know that most of the letters said to come from there, with such accounts, are mere London fictions. I will consider attentively the proposition above mentioned against the return of my colleagues, when I hope our commission will be arrived.

I rejoice to hear that your dear sister's recovery advances, and that your brother is well: Please to present my affectionate respects to them, and believe me ever, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Extract of a Letter to Robert Morris, Esq.,

(Superintendant of Finances, United States.)

Passy, Dec. 25, 1783.

THE remissness of our people in paying taxes, is highly blameable, the unwillingness to pay them is still more so. I see in some resolutions of town meetings, a remonstrance against giving congress a power to take, as they call it, *the people's money* out of their pockets, though only to pay the interest and principal of debts duly contracted. They seem to mistake the point. Money justly due from the people, is their creditor's money, and no longer the money of the people, who, if they withhold it, should be compelled to pay by some law. All property indeed, except the savage's temporary cabin, his bow, his matchuat, and other little acquisitions ab-

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solutely necessary for his subsistence, seems to me to be the creature of public convention. Hence the public has the right of regulating descents, and all other conveyances of property and even of limiting the quantity and the uses of it. All the property that is necessary to a man for the conservation of the individual and the propagation of the species, is his natural right, which none can justly deprive him of; but all property superfluous to such purposes is the property of the public, who by their laws have created it, and who may therefore by other laws dispose of it whenever the welfare of the public shall desire such disposition. He that does not like civil society on these terms, let him retire and live among savages. He can have no right to the benefits of society who will not pay his club towards the support of it.

The marquis de la Fayette, who loves to be employed in our affairs, and is often very useful, has lately had several conversations with the ministers and persons concerned in forming new regulations respecting the commerce between our two countries, which are not yet concluded. I thought it therefore well to communicate to him a copy of your letter which contains so many sensible and just observations on that subject. He will make a proper use of them, and perhaps they may have more weight, as appearing to come from a Frenchman, than they would have if it were known that they were the observations of an American. I perfectly agree with you in all the sentiments you have expressed on this occasion.

I am sorry for the public's sake that you are about to quit your office, but on personal considerations, I shall congratulate you. For I cannot conceive of a more happy man, than he who having been long loaded with public cares, finds himself relieved from them, and enjoying private repose in the bosom of his friends and family.

With sincere regard and attachment, I am ever, dear sir, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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Extract of a Letter to Thomas Mifflin, Esq.,

(President of Congress.)

Passy, Dec. 25, 1783.

IT was certainly disagreeable to the English ministers, that all their treaties for peace were carried on under the eye of the French court. This began to appear towards the conclusion, when Mr. Hartley refused going to Versailles to sign there with the other powers, our definitive treaty, and insisted on its being done at Paris, which we in good humor complied with, but at an earlier hour, that we might have time to acquaint le comte de Vergennes before he was to sign with the duke of Manchester. The Dutch definitive was not then ready, and the British court now insisted on finishing it either at London or the Hague. If heretofore the commission to us, which has been so long delayed, is still intended, perhaps it will be well to instruct us to treat either here, or at London, as we may find most convenient. The treaty may be conducted even there in concert and in the confidence of communication with the ministers of our friends, whose advice may be of use to us.

With respect to the British court, we should I think be constantly upon our guard, and impress strongly upon our minds, that though it has made peace with us, it is not in truth reconciled to us, or to its loss of us; but still flatters itself with hopes, that some change of the affairs of Europe, or some disunion among ourselves, may afford them an opportunity of recovering their dominion, punishing those who have most offended, and securing our future dependance. It is easy to see by the general turn of the ministerial newspapers; (light things indeed, as straws and feathers, but like them they show which way the wind blows) and by the malignant improvement their ministers make in all foreign courts, of every little accident at Philadelphia, the resolves of some town meetings, the reluctance to pay taxes, &c. &c., all which are exaggerated to represent our governments as so many anarchies, of which the people themselves are weary,

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the congress as having lost its influence, being no longer respected: I say it is easy to see from this conduct, that they bear us no good will, and that they wish the reality of what they are pleased to imagine. They have too a numerous royal progeny to provide for, some of whom are educated in the military line. In these circumstances, we cannot be too careful to preserve the friendship we have acquired abroad, and the union we have established at home, to secure our credit by a punctual discharge of our obligations of every kind, and our reputation by the wisdom of our councils; since we know not how soon we may have fresh occasion for friends, for credit, and for reputation.

The extravagant misrepresentations of our political state in foreign countries, made it appear necessary to give them better information, which I thought could not be more effectually and authentically done than by publishing a translation into French, (now the most general language in Europe,) of the book of constitutions which had been printed by order of congress. This I accordingly got well done, and presented two copies handsomely bound to every foreign minister here, one for himself, the other more elegant, for his sovereign. It has been well taken, and has afforded a matter of surprise to many who had conceived mean ideas of the state of civilization in America, and could not have expected so much political knowlege and sagacity had existed in our wilderness: and from all parts I have the satisfaction to hear that our constitutions in general are much admired. I am persuaded that this step will not only tend to promote the emigration to our country of substantial people from all parts of Europe, but the numerous copies I shall disperse, will facilitate our future treaties with foreign courts; who could not before know what kind of government and people they had to treat with: as in doing this, I have endeavored to further the apparent views of congress in the first publication, I hope it may be approved, and the expense allowed. I send herewith one of the copies.

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To Charles Thomson, Esq., Secretary of Congress.

Passy, May 13, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

YESTERDAY evening Mr. Hartley met with Mr. Jay and myself, when the ratifications of the definitive treaty were exchanged. I send a copy of the English ratification to the president. Thus the great and hazardous enterprise we have been engaged in is, God be praised, happily completed: an event I hardly expected I should live to see. A few years of peace, well improved, will restore and increase our strength: but our future safety will depend on our union and our virtue. Britain will be long watching for advantages, to recover what she has lost. If we do not convince the world, that we are a nation to be depended on for fidelity in treaties; if we appear negligent in paying our debts, and ungrateful to those who have served and befriended us; our reputation, and all the strength it is capable of procuring, will be lost, and fresh attacks upon us will be encouraged and promoted, by better prospects of success. Let us therefore beware of being lulled into a dangerous security; and of being both enervated and impoverished by luxury: of being weakened by internal contentions and divisions; of being shamefully extravagant in contracting private debts, while we are backward in discharging honorably those of the public; of neglect in military exercises and discipline, and in providing stores of arms and munition of war, to be ready on occasion: for all these are circumstances that give confidence to enemies, and diffidence to friends; and the expenses required to prevent a war, are much lighter than those that will, if not prevented, be absolutely necessary to maintain it.

I am long kept in suspense without being able to learn the purpose of congress respecting my request of recall, and that of some employment for my secretary, W. Temple Franklin. If I am kept here another winter, and as much weakened by it as by the last, I may as well resolve to spend the remainder of my days here; for I shall hardly be able to bear

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the fatigues of the voyage in returning. During my long absence from America my friends are continually diminishing by death, and my inducements to return lessened in proportion. But I can make no preparations either for going conveniently, or staying comfortably here, nor take any steps towards making some other provision for my grandson, till I know what I am to expect. Be so good, my dear friend, to send me a little private information.

With great esteem, I am ever yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

From David Hartley, Esq., M. P., to Dr. Franklin.

Paris, June 1, 1784.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to inform you, that I have transmitted to London the ratification, on the part of congress, of the definitive treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States of America. I am ordered to represent to you,[y] that a

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[y] *Copy of a Letter from Lord Carmarthen to D. Hartley, Esq.*

St. James's, May 28, 1784.

SIR,

I RECEIVED this morning by Lauzun, your dispatch No. 5, and the private letter of the 24th instant, together with the ratification of the treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America; and I own it was with the greatest surprise that I perceived so essential a want of form as appears in the very first paragraph of that instrument, wherein the United States are mentioned before his majesty, contrary to the established custom observed in every treaty in which a crowned head, and a republic are contracting parties.

The conclusion, likewise, appears extremely deficient, as it is neither signed by the president nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument.

I should think the American ministers could make no objection to correcting these defects in the ratification, which might very easily be done, either by signing a declaration in the name of congress for preventing the particular mode of expression, so far as relates to precedency, in the first

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want of form appears in the first paragraph of that instrument, wherein the United States are mentioned before his majesty, contrary to the established custom in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are parties. It is likewise to be observed, that the term "*definitive articles,*" is used instead of *definitive treaty;* and the conclusion appears likewise deficient, as it is neither signed by the president, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument.

I am ordered to propose to you, sir, that these defects in the ratification should be corrected, which might very easily be done either by signing a declaration in the name of congress, for preventing the particular mode of expression, so far as relates to precedency in the first paragraph, being considered as a precedent to be adopted on any future occasion; or else by having a new copy made out in America, in which these mistakes should be corrected, and which might be done without any prejudice arising to either of the parties from the delay.

I am, sir, with great respect and consideration, your most obedient humble servant,

DAVID HARTLEY.

To B. Franklin, Esq.

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paragraph, being considered as a precedent, to be adopted on any future occasion, or else by having a new copy made out in America, in which these mistakes should be corrected, and which might be done without any prejudice arising to either of the parties from the delay.

I am, with great truth and regard, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

CARMARTHEN.

P. S. I send you inclosed a copy of the ratification—part of the treaty which it is also to be observed were previously described as "definitive *articles.*"

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To David Hartley, Esq.

Passy, June 2, 1784.

SIR,

I HAVE considered the observations you did me the honor of communicating to me, concerning certain inaccuracies of expression, and supposed defects of formality in the instrument of ratification; some of which are said to be of such a nature as to affect "the validity of the instrument." The first is, "that the United States are named before his majesty, contrary to the established custom observed in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are the contracting parties." With respect to this, it seems to me, that we should distinguish between the act in which both join, to wit, the *treaty*, and that which is the act of each separately, the *ratification*. It is necessary that all the modes of expression in the joint act, should be agreed to by both parties; though on their separate acts, each party is master of, and alone accountable for, its own mode. If the ministers of the United States had insisted, or even proposed naming in the treaty the states before the king, it might have been deemed injurious to his dignity, as requiring him to acknowlege, by that joint act, their superiority. But this was not the case; on inspecting the treaty it will be found that his majesty is always regularly named before the United States. How it happened that the same order was not observed in the ratification, I am not informed. Our secretaries are new in this kind of business, which methinks should be favorably considered if they chance to make mistakes. They may have been led by some precedent; or being republicans, and of course preferring that kind of government as in their opinions more excellent than monarchy, they may naturally have thought it right when the two kinds were to be named in their own instrument, to give their own kind the precedence; an effect of that sort of complaisance which almost every nation seems to have for itself, and of which the English too afford an instance, when in the title of the king they always name Great

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Britain before France. The congress however, adopted the form presented to them, and it is thus become an act of theirs; but the king having no part in it, if it is improper, it reflects only upon those who committed the impropriety, and can no way affect his majesty. Whatever may have occasioned this transposition, I am confident no disrespect to the *king* was intended in it by the congress. They as little thought of affronting his majesty by naming the states before him, as your ministers did of affronting the Supreme Being, when in the corresponding first paragraph of their ratification they named the king before the Deity. There cannot be a clearer proof of this, than what is to be found in the ratification itself. In the treaty the king, as I said before, is always first named. Thus the established custom in treaties between "crowned heads and republics," contended for on your part, was strictly observed; and the ratification following the treaty contains these words, "Now know ye, that We the United States in congress assembled, having seen and considered the definitive articles, *have approved, ratified, and confirmed*, and by these presents do *approve, ratify, and confirm*, the said articles, AND EVERY PART AND CLAUSE THEREOF, &c." Thus all those articles, parts, and clauses, wherein the king is named before the United States, are *approved, ratified and confirmed;* and this solemnly under the signature of the president of congress, with the public seal affixed by their order, and countersigned by their secretary. No declaration on the subject, more determinate or more authentic, can possibly be made or given, which when considered, may probably induce his majesty's ministers to wave the proposition of our signing a similar declaration, or of sending back the ratification to be corrected in this point, neither appearing to be really necessary. I will, however, if still desired, transmit to congress the observation and the difficulty occasioned by it, and request their orders upon it. I can have no doubt of their willingness to give every reasonable satisfaction.

If the words *definitive treaty* had been used, instead of *definitive articles*, it might have been more correct, though the

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difference seems not great, nor of much importance, as in the treaty itself it is called the present *definitive treaty*.

The other objections are, "That the conclusion likewise appears deficient, as it is neither signed by the president, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument." It is true that the signature of the president is not placed at the end of the piece. Among the infinite number of treaties and ratifications that have been made in different ages and countries, there are found a great variety in the forms, and in the manner of placing the seals and signatures, all however equally authentic and binding. Which of the precedents we have followed, I know not; but I think our ratifications have generally been sealed in the margin near the beginning, and the president's name subscribed by him, as it ought to be, near the seal. This is then our usage. And it has never hitherto been objected to by any of the powers with whom we have treated, not even by yourselves in our ratification, of the preliminary articles exchanged in 1783. And I observe, that your own method is not always uniform, for in your last ratification the king signs only at the end, in the first at both the end and the beginning. If we had, like older nations, a great seal, the impression of which, from its bulk and weight, could only be appended, the signature might properly be placed above it at the end of the instrument. Probably the want of an able artist prevented our having hitherto such a seal. In the mean time as all the parts of the instrument are connected by a ribband, whose ends are secured under the impression; the signature and seal, wherever placed, relate to, and authenticate the whole. This is expressly declared by the congress in the concluding sentence, viz., *In testimony whereof*, "we have caused the seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed. Witness, his excellency Thomas Mifflin, Esq., President, this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eight-four." It is thus that the duplicate before me is *dated*, in these words at length, and

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I apprehend the original exchanged must be the same, so that the essential article of a date was not wanting as supposed, but has been overlooked by the person who made the objection.

The ratification was passed in congress unanimously, and the treaty will, I firmly believe, be punctually and *faithfully* executed on their part; we confide that the same will be done on yours. Let us endeavor, on all sides, to establish the "*firm and perpetual peace,*" we have promised to each other, and not to suffer even the prospect of it to be clouded by too critical an attention to small forms and immaterial circumstances.

With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the same.

Passy, January 8, 1785.

My dear Friend,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of December 1, from Bath. I am glad to hear that your good sister is in a fair way towards recovery; my respects and best wishes attend her.

I communicated your letter to Mr. Jefferson, to remind him of his promise to communicate to you the intelligence he might receive from America on the subjects you mention; and now having got it back, I shall endeavor to answer the other parts of it.

What you propose to draw up of your opinions on American negotiation, may be of great use, if laid, as you intend, before administration, in case they seriously intend to enter on it after the meeting of parliament: for I know your ideas all tend to a good understanding between the two countries and their common advantage; and in my mind too, all selfish projects of partial profit are the effects of shortsightedness, they never producing permanent benefits, and are at

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length the causes of discord and its consequences, wherein much more is spent than all the temporary gains amounted to.

I do not know that any one is yet appointed by your court to treat with us. We some time since acquainted your minister with our powers and disposition to treat, which he communicated to his court, and received for answer that his majesty's ministers were ready to receive any propositions we might have to make for the common benefit of both countries, but they thought it more for the honor of both, that the treaty should not be in a third place. We answered, that though we did not see much inconvenience in treating here, we would, as soon as we had finished some affairs at present on our hands, wait upon them, if they pleased, in London. We have since heard nothing.

We have no late accounts from America of any importance. You know the congress adjourned the beginning of June, till the beginning of November. And since their meeting there has been no account of their proceedings. All the stories in your papers relating to their divisions, &c. are fiction, as well as those of the people being discontented with congressional government. Mr. Jay writes to me, that they were at no time more happy or more satisfied with their government, &c. than at present, nor ever enjoyed more tranquillity or prosperity. In truth the freedom of their ports to all nations, has brought in a vast plenty of foreign goods, and occasioned a demand for their produce, the consequence of which is, the double advantage of buying what they consume cheap, and selling what they can spare dear.

If we should come to London, I hope it may still be with you, that we are to do business. Our already understanding one another, may save, on many points, a good deal of time in discussion. But I doubt whether any treaty is intended on your part, and I fancy we shall not press it. It may perhaps be best to give both sides time to inquire, and to *feel* for the interests they cannot *see*.

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With sincere and great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours, most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To John Jay, Esq., Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Philadelphia, Sept. 19, 1785.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acquaint you, that I left Paris the 12th of July, and agreeably to the permission of congress am returned to my country. Mr. Jefferson had recovered his health, and was much esteemed and respected there. Our joint letters have already informed you of our late proceedings, to which I have nothing to add, except, that the last act I did, as minister plenipotentiary for making treaties, was to sign with him, two days before I came away, the treaty of friendship and commerce that had been agreed on with Prussia, and which was to be carried to the Hague by Mr. Short, there to be signed by baron Thulemeyer, on the part of the king, who without the least hesitation had approved and conceded to the new humane articles proposed by congress, which articles are considered as doing that body great honor. Mr. Short was also to go to London with the treaty, for the signature of Mr. Adams, who I learnt, when at Southampton, is well received at the British court. The captain Lamb, who in a letter of yours to Mr. Adams, was said to be coming to us with instructions respecting Morocco, had not appeared, nor had we heard any thing of him; so nothing has been done by us in that treaty. I left the court of France, in the same friendly disposition towards the United States, that we have all along experienced, though concerned to find our credit is not better supported in the payment of the interest money due on our loans, which in case of another war must be, they think, extremely prejudicial to us, and indeed may contribute to draw on a war the sooner, by affording our enemies the encouraging confidence, that a people who take so little care to pay, will not again find it easy to borrow. I received from the king, at my departure, the present of his picture set

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round with diamonds, usually given to ministers plenipotentiary who have signed any treaties with that court, and it is at the disposition of congress; to whom, be pleased to present my dutiful respects.

I am, sir, with great esteem, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

PS. Not caring to trust them to a common conveyance, I send by my late secretary, W. T. Franklin, who will have the honor of delivering them to you, all the original treaties I have been concerned in negotiating, that were completed. Those with Portugal and Denmark continue in suspense.

To * * * *.

Philadelphia, Jan. 19, 1790.

SIR,

I RECEIVED the letter you did me the honor of writing to me respecting the construction of the eleventh article of the treaty of commerce between France and the United States. I was indeed one of the commissioners for making that treaty, but the commissioners have no right to explain the treaty. Its explanation is to be sought for in its own words, and in case it cannot be clearly found there, then by application to the contracting powers.

I certainly conceived that when the *droit d'aubaine* was relinquished in favor of the citizens of the United States, the relinquishing clause was meant to extend to all the dominions of his most christian majesty, and I am of opinion that this would not be denied if an explanation were requested of the court of France, and it ought to be done, if any difficulties arise on this subject in the French islands, which their courts do not determine in our favor. But before congress is petitioned to make such request, I imagine it would be proper to have the case tried in some of the West India islands, and the petition made in consequence of a determination against us. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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Copy of the last Letter written by Dr. Franklin.

SIR, *Philadelphia, April* 8, 1790.

I RECEIVED your letter of the 31st of last past, relating to encroachments made on the eastern limits of the United States, by settlers under the British government, pretending that it is the *western*, and not the *eastern* river of the bay of Passamaquoddy, which was designated by the name of St. Croix, in the treaty of peace with that nation; and requesting of me to communicate any facts which my memory or papers, may enable me to recollect, and which may indicate the true river which the commissioners on both sides had in their view to establish, as the boundary between the two nations.

Your letter found me under a severe fit of my malady, which prevented my answering it sooner, or attending, indeed, to any kind of business. I now can assure you, that I am perfectly clear in the remembrance, that the map we used in tracing the boundary was brought to the treaty by the commissioners from England, and that it was the same that was published by *Mitchell* above twenty years before. Having a copy of that map by me in loose sheets, I send you that sheet which contains the bay of Passamaquoddy, where you will see that part of the boundary traced. I remember too, that in that part of the boundary, we relied much on the opinion of Mr. Adams, who had been concerned in some former disputes concerning those territories. I think therefore that you may obtain still farther light from him.

That the map we used was Mitchell's map, congress were acquainted at the time, by letter to their secretary for foreign affairs, which I suppose may be found upon their files.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest esteem and respect, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Thomas Jefferson,
Secretary of State of the United States.

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